

PRESSED BY A DOUBLE LOYALTY

ANDRÁS
FEJÉRDY

HUNGARIAN ATTENDANCE
AT THE SECOND VATICAN
COUNCIL • 1959–1965

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Hungarian Attendance
at the Second Vatican Council,
1959–1965

András Fejérdy



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Foreword

The history of the Second Vatican Council and the history of the policy of openness towards the East-Central European Communist countries, that is, the so called Vatican “Ostpolitik,” were looked at until now as two separate topics of research. The virtue of András Fejérdy’s work is to demonstrate, at the end of a thorough-going study through various available archives (first of all of the party and state, but also ecclesiastical ones), that it is not like that but in reality the two topics are closely linked. The case of János Kádár’s Hungary is in that way particularly significant. More than all other popular democratic states, the Hungarian regime needed, after the brutal repression of the revolution in 1956, to project a good image of itself at the international level. If the goal pursued, in long term, remained the elimination of any religion, good sense recommended, in short term, to use the Catholic Church, such an old and solidly established institution, for the consolidation of the system and the achievement of a socialist society. This new church policy presupposed that all the so called “progressive” movements (as the peace priest movement) in favour of a collaboration with the government must be encouraged in the Church, and that all of the so called “reactionary” forces opposed to any kind of compromise with the Communist regime must be marginalized. The Council convoked by Pope John XXIII only three months after his election was an opportunity to draw the country out of its isolation and, in the long term, reinforce the goals of Soviet policy (pacific coexistence, disarmament). The Hungarian and all socialist leaders started to realize in the spring of 1962, after being afraid at first that the event in preparation in Rome was only a way to reinforce the antagonism between the two blocs by building a sort of “religious curtain” (*cortina religiosa*) against the iron curtain, that the Council could be an occasion to achieve

their goals. The decision was finally taken by the Hungarian Politburo, in close collaboration with the other socialist parties (particularly the Czechoslovakian one), to send a delegation of nine persons (two bishops, an apostolic administrator and their escort, all carefully chosen and “briefed” before they left and strictly controlled by the Hungarian secret services at the Rome embassy when they arrived in Rome). This decision allowed the opening of direct and secret negotiations between the Holy See and the Hungarian government which ended, in less than two years, with the signing of the famous agreement of September 15, 1964, the first concrete results of the Vatican Ostpolitik. Hungary became in that way “the experimental laboratory of eastern policy” of the socialist countries. We can note, as is demonstrated by the precise and detailed study of András Fejérdy, that there was also a real wish from the Vatican’s side to come to an agreement. The intransigent policy of the Holy See under Pius XII in the fifties, characterized by an obsessive personal anti-Communism, had shown its limits. After the failure of the Hungarian insurrection in ‘56 it was clear that these regimes were destined to remain for a long time. It was necessary to accept this fact and to try to preserve what was essential, the survival of the Catholic Church in these countries. One of the first actions of John XXIII, shortly after the annunciation of his decision to convoke an ecumenical council, was to invite the Hungarian bishops to Rome to discuss the situation of the local Church. While the government did not allow the Hungarian bishops in February 1959 to travel to Rome, three years later, at the beginning of the Vatican Council its attitude changed and let them attend the Council. The members of the Hungarian delegation tried to inform the pope and his allies in the Secretariat of State about the good intentions of the Hungarian authorities. The following visits of the cardinal archbishop of Wien, Franz König, and Msgr Agostino Casaroli, at that time only the undersecretary of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, to Budapest in the spring of 1963 were the consequence of these contacts. If these first discussions were not able to resolve the delicate case of Cardinal Mindszenty (a refugee in the American embassy since November 1956), they formed the basis for the future agreement signed some months later. From Rome’s point of view, the essential seemed to have been reached: the reestablishment of a hierarchy in communion with the Apostolic See. At the same time the numerous concessions accepted by the Vatican in order to arrive to this agreement contributed to attenuate its importance. One

of the main concessions was the seizing of control of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute by the Communist authorities. This institute was until that time a center of opposition against the regime due to the presence of hostile émigré priests, but thereafter it became “an important and effective means of asserting the Hungarian government’s ecclesiastical policy.” Was the agreement more a success on the part of the regime or a success of the Church? The author’s severe judgement about this agreement well represents the new orientation of historiography regarding the Vatican’s Ostpolitik. This kind of historiography based in a concentration on the local sources of the Ostpolitik seeks to reveal the limits of a policy guided in the name of a close vision of Church’s interests. We cannot forget that one of the goals of the policy of dialogue inaugurated by John XXIII and pursued by Paul VI, in spite of doubts and critics, was to promote peace and detente in conformity with the spirit of the Second Vatican Council. This policy has contributed, through the participation of the Holy See at the Conference of Helsinki on the cooperation and the security in Europe, to the liberation of the peoples of the European Communist regimes, even if it did not appear so “glorious” —as Paul VI on one occasion confided to Msgr Casaroli.*

Philippe Chenaux

* Speech of Card. Casaroli on the occasion of the solemn commemoration of the anniversary of the birth of Pope Paul VI. Vatican City, November 22, 1997. Cited in: Morozzo della Rocca, *Tra Est e Ovest*, 186.

Preface and acknowledgments

This book examines the history of Hungarian participation in the Second Vatican Council within the context of Hungarian ecclesiastical policy and the development of Vatican–Hungarian relations. It is thus not exclusively a work on church history but the results of research which, beyond the perspective of church history in the stricter sense of the word, also considers the aspects of the analyzed processes from the perspectives of social, political and diplomatic history. For this reason, the volume not only forms part of the research into the participation of the national episcopates in the Second Vatican Council, but also enriches research on the international aspects of the Cold War and Détente, Vatican diplomatic history (in particular the Holy See's policy towards the nations of Central and Eastern Europe in the Soviet sphere of interest), the ecclesiastical policy of the Soviet Bloc and of Hungary specifically, or for that matter the Catholic history of *Mittel-europa*, with important results.

A comprehensive analysis of Vatican–Hungarian relations in the final years of the 1950s and the decade of the 1960s, as well as of the history of the Hungarian involvement in the Second Vatican Council, placed in a broader ecclesiastical, political and diplomatic history context, has yet to be written. The fiftieth anniversary of the Council provides an excellent occasion to offer a fundamentally authentic picture of the background to Hungarian attendance at Vatican II, together with its events and results, by critically analyzing the ample source material on the subject generated by the party-state organs, as well as by contrasting these with the ecclesiastical and other sources already accessible, even before the relevant sources become fully researchable.

At the same time, supplementing the documents of the party-state organs and Hungarian ecclesiastical sources with Vatican and other western sources has made it possible to overcome the peculiar duality that can be observed in the historiography on the Vatican's eastern policy. Behind the two basic interpretations of the Vatican's eastern policy, which communicate with each other mostly only on the level of polemics, lies the reality that the local sources, written in national languages, and the international, diplomatic sources are as a rule (if only because of the linguistic barriers and difficulties of access) studied independently of one another. My findings show also that contrasting the results of "western" historiography with research from Central Europe (the former, emphasizing the pastoral nature of *Ostpolitik*, relies primarily on diplomatic documents and positively assesses the eastern policy in the dimension of world politics; the latter, using the documents of the party state and the recollections of the members of the "Church of Silence," focuses on local aspects and emphasizes the deficiencies and limits of the eastern policy while viewing the results of dialogue critically), even when restricted just to the case of Hungary, significantly nuances our previous knowledge. Among other things, it confirms once more that a black and white reading of *Ostpolitik*, often based on one-sided use of sources, is incorrect: just as the critical assessment, frequently placing local considerations at the forefront, is in need of revision, the occasionally apologetic outlook defending the Vatican's eastern policy is also untenable.

The most significant finding of the research summarized in this book is that thanks to the Vatican and Hungarian party-state interests tied to it, the Second Vatican Council (with respect to Hungary) was not primarily an internal church event but was closely linked throughout to the Vatican-Hungarian negotiations: during the Council Hungary in fact became the experimental laboratory for the new Vatican eastern policy taking shape. The results of my research at the same time also shed light on the fact that no such close connection can be demonstrated between the teachings articulated at Vatican II and the theoretical grounding of the new Vatican eastern policy. Although the new theological outlook did serve to strengthen the Holy See's basically pragmatic eastern policy, Vatican diplomacy in the period examined continued to move within the bounds of the traditional "thesis and hypothesis" theory elaborated by Secretary of State Cardinal Giacomo Antonelli.

It follows from the above that not only researchers and theologians dealing with the history of Vatican II will profit from the book. I am convinced that my book (not least on account of the significant deficiencies in the English-language literature on the Vatican's eastern policy) contains important findings that will also prove useful to researchers studying the post-1945 history of the Catholic Church, the East Central European region, the situation of the denominations and churches of the Soviet zone, the processes of the Cold War and Détente, and the new eastern policy pursued by the Vatican from the 1960s on. Finally, the monograph also provides the wider reading public basic information about one of the most important periods in recent church history, Hungarian social and church history of the 1950s and 1960s, the church policy practice of the Soviet Bloc, and the background to the conclusion of the 1964 Vatican–Hungarian partial agreement, which would determine the boundaries within which the Hungarian Catholic Church could operate for a good two decades.

I would like to thank my family, first and foremost my wife, Mariann, and my children—Klára, Piroska, Bernát, and Domonkos—for their enduring patience and for providing the support and loving family atmosphere indispensable for carrying out the work. I also owe a debt of gratitude to my Piarist teacher Ödön Lénárd—“Uncle Dönci”—who suffered the longest term of imprisonment (19 years) among Hungarian priests, kindled my interest in twentieth-century church history and launched me on my professional career. I thank my teachers and mentors, especially Gábor Adriányi and Jenő Gergely, for their professional help and guidance. I am grateful also to my colleagues in the Institute of History, Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences (HAS RCH), as well as to the archivists who came to my assistance at the various archives I visited, for all the help provided in research and analyzing the materials: for reasons of space, and lest I unintentionally leave someone out, I omit listing them by name.

I would like to thank Marianne Sággy for recommending that CEU Press publish and distribute the present volume. Special thanks are owed to the volume's translator, Matthew W. Caples, as well as to Alan Campbell, who translated the chronology and annex, for preparing a careful translation of

my text, which was not always the easiest and assumed much background knowledge. Last but not least, my thanks are due to those who by the provision of financial assistance made the preparation of the English manuscript possible: Minister Zoltán Balog, who allocated funds for this purpose from the National Cultural Foundation (NKA); Pál Fodor, director general of the HAS RCH and director of the Institute of History, for the support provided by the institute; and Rector Szabolcs Anzelm Szuromi, O. Praem, and Dean Máté Botos, for providing support from the Research Fund Program (KAP) of Péter Pázmány Catholic University.

List of Abbreviations

ÁBTL	Állambiztonsági Szolgálatok Történeti Levéltára (Historical Archives of the Hungarian State Security)
ÁEH	Állami Egyházügyi Hivatal (State Office for Church Affairs)
AC	Actio Catholica (Catholic Action)
Amm. Ap.	Amministratore Apostolico (Apostolic Administrator)
ASDMAE	Archivio Storico Diplomatico del Ministero per gli Affari Esteri
ASV	Archivio Segreto Vaticano
ÁVO	Államvédelmi Osztály (State Protection Department)
ÁVH	Államvédelmi Hatóság (State Protection Authority)
b.	busta (folder)
BFL	Budapest Főváros Levéltára (Budapest Municipal Archives)
can.	canon
cap.	caput (chapter)
CARC	Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults
Card.	Cardinal
CAROC	Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church
CC	Central Committee
CEU	Central European University
CD	Christus Dominus (Decree of Vatican II on the Pastoral Office of Bishops)
CL	Central Leadership
Cf.	confer (compare)
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CIC	Codex Iuris Canonici (Code of Canon Law)
CPSU	Communist Party of the Soviet Union
cs.	csomó (sheaf of documents)

d.	doboz (box)
DC	Democrazia Cristiana
Ecc.mi	Eccellentissimi
EUGE	Ecclesiasticorum Unio Gratia Emolumenti Socialis (Union for the Social Benefit of Clerics)
f.	fond
fasc.	fascicolo
FÉKOSZ	Földmunkások és Kisbirtokosok Országos Szövetsége (National League of Peasants and Smallholders)
GDR	German Democratic Republic
GS	Gaudium et Spes (Pastoral constitution of Vatican II on the Church in the modern world)
GUGB	Glavnoe Upravlenie Gosudarstvennoi Bezopasnosti (Main Directorate of State Security)
HAS RCH	Research Centre for the Humanities of the Hungarian Academy of Sciences
HSWP	Hungarian Socialist Worker's Party
IM	Interior Ministry
Jn	John (Gospel)
KALOT	Katolikus Agrárifjúsági és Legényegyesületek Országos Testülete (National Association of Young Catholic Agrarian Journeymen)
KALÁSZ	Katolikus Asszonyok és Lányok Szövetsége (Federation of Catholic Women and Girls)
KAP	Kutatási Alap Program (Research Fund Program)
KISZ	Kommunista Ifjúsági Szövetség (Communist Youth League)
KMP	Kommunisták Magyarországi Pártja (Communist Party of Hungary)
LG	Lumen Gentium (Dogmatic Constitution of Vatican II on the Church)
MADISZ	Magyar Demokratikus Ifjúsági Szövetség (Alliance of Hungarian Democratic Youth)
MDP	Magyar Dolgozók Pártja (Hungarian Working People's Party)
MINSZ	Magyar Ifjúság Népi Szövetsége (People's League of Hungarian Youth)
MKP	Magyar Kommunista Párt (Hungarian Communist Party)

MKPK	Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Konferencia (Hungarian Catholic Bishops' Conference)
Mons., Msgr	Monsignore
MNL-OL	Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára (Hungarian National Archives)
MSZDP	Magyarországi Szociáldemokrata Párt (Social Democratic Party of Hungary)
MTI	Magyar Távirati Iroda (Hungarian Telegraph Office)
n., No.	numero, number
NA	Nostra Aetate (Declaration of Vatican II on the relation of the Church with Non-Christian religions)
NATO	North Atlantic Treaty Organisation
NKA	Nemzeti Kulturális Alap (National Cultural Foundation)
NKGB	Narodny Komissariat gosudarstvennoy bezopasnosti (People's Commissariat for State Security)
NKVD	Narodnyy Komissariat vnutrennikh del (People's Commissariat for Internal Affairs)
OFM	Ordo Fratrum Minorum (Order of Friars Minor)
OFM Conv.	Ordo Fratrum Minorum Conventualium (Order of Friars Minor Conventual)
OSB	Ordo Sancti Benedicti (Order of Saint Benedict)
ORFK	Országos Rendőr-főkapitányság (National Police Force)
ő.e.	őrzési egység (preservation unit)
p.	page
PC	Perfectae Caritatis (Decree of Vatican II on the adaptation and renewal of religious life)
PCPC	Prague Christian Peace Conference
PRO	Politikai Rendészeti Osztály (Political Police Department)
RAI	Radio Audizioni Italia
RC	Roman Catholic
S.	Sacra, sancta (saint)
S.C.	sacra congregatio (Sacred Congregation)
SS.	Sacrosanctus (sacrosanct)
SSR	Soviet Socialist Republic
St	Saint
SZIA	Szent István Alapítvány (St Stephen Foundation)

Introduction

The Second Vatican Council is perhaps the most important event in the twentieth-century history of the Catholic Church. Among the possible approaches to this momentous happening, in recent years those studies dealing with the participation of the bishops and theologians of the various countries, and their impact on the Council's work, are receiving ever greater space. The present volume, which aims to analyze the history of the Hungarian presence at the Second Vatican Council, seeks to contribute to this on-going research.

Nevertheless, in the case of Hungary it does not suffice to concentrate on ecclesiastical participation, for it must be borne in mind also that the political leadership of the Soviet Bloc countries followed the events of the Council with particular attention. The circumstances burdening the churches, determined by strong (party-) state control, make it indispensable for us to examine the question of Hungarian participation in the Council, moreover the composition of the delegations to the Council and their activities in the sessions, and last but not least—at least in outline—the reception of the Council in Hungary in the context of the evolution of contemporary (church) policy and Vatican–Hungarian relations.

We will obtain a realistic picture of the history of Hungarian participation in the Council if we attempt to clarify the motivations and activities of all the actors involved. Because the Council was fundamentally an internal event of the Catholic Church, in the first place the intentions of the Holy See and the Universal Church that held the Council must be examined. In this we will seek an answer first of all to the question how the Council fit into the Holy See's new *Ostpolitik*, started during the pontificate of John XXIII. In other words, what did Rome do in order to secure the participation of the

bishops of the churches behind the Iron Curtain? How did it seek to utilize the opportunity for meeting offered by the Council to prepare the establishment of relations with the socialist governments and, in the case of Hungary, to begin bilateral negotiations? How did it attempt to utilize the personal meetings with the prelates to strengthen the Hungarian Church? It is in the context of *Ostpolitik* that we seek to analyze, apart from the above, the Council's teaching (in part social and political) and the impact of the newly articulated principles; in other words, the interplay of the practice of the eastern policy and the theoretical teachings formulated at the Council.

At the same time, the issue of Hungarian attendance and the proceedings of the Council must also be placed within the totality of the (church) policy of the Hungarian government—and even more broadly of the entire Soviet Bloc. Answers must be provided to the following questions. Based on what considerations did the leaders of the Hungarian People's Republic, in a hostile relationship with the Holy See, decide in favor of permitting a Hungarian delegation to attend? What criteria determined the composition of the Hungarian council delegations sent to each session? How did the leadership of the Hungarian (party-) state exploit the opportunity offered by the Council to establish relations and assert its interests with the Holy See? Finally, by what means did it control, and to what extent did it influence, how domestic (Catholic) society became informed about the work of the Council and the reception of its teachings in Hungary?

Knowledge of the role of the above two elements then allows us to correctly evaluate the third factor, the participation of the Hungarian church leaders, acting in the tension of a dual loyalty, in the Council. Thus, did the Hungarian prelates prove to be the regime's mouthpiece, or did they attempt in the interests of the Church to take the best possible advantage of the "limited freedom" provided by Hungarian church policy? Furthermore, was their stay in Rome confined only to mediating between the Holy See and the Hungarian government, briefing the Holy See and promoting a *modus non moriendi* in Hungary, or did their activity also contribute substantively to a clarification of the issues debated at the Council and the work of the Council? Lastly, a multilateral and thorough analysis of the Hungarian Church's possibilities and activity in the context of the Holy See and the state leadership in Budapest and its intentions provides an opportunity to evaluate its effect on the life of the Hungarian Church and the development of

Vatican–Hungarian relations, as well as the theological importance of Hungarian participation.

The Second Vatican Council—in keeping with its significance—possesses a quite rich (church) historical specialist literature. The five-volume work published by the research group led by Giuseppe Alberigo, *Storia del concilio Vaticano II* (appearing between 1995 and 2001 and translated into several world languages) represents a kind of summation of research prior to 2000; since then, however, a large number of publications on the topic have appeared yearly.¹ Those that have an indirect or direct bearing on the subject of the present volume include primarily studies and monographs dealing with the history of diplomatic and political relations between the Holy See and the socialist states,² analyzing the relationship of the various states and governments, as well as episcopates to the Council,³ or for that matter examining the question of the condemnation of Communism at the Council.⁴

Although documents dealing expressly with Hungarian participation in the Council can be found in the extensive specialist literature on the Second Vatican Council as well, the Hungarian presence at the Council has yet to be analyzed comprehensively. András Máté-Tóth, analyzing the reception of the Council in Hungary within the international pastoral theology research program *Aufbruch*, was the first to deal with the question, but in the course of his research he relied, apart from investigations in the sociology of religion, exclusively on the “Canale” series of object dossiers found in the Historical Archives of the State Security Services.⁵ In his rather one-sided study (containing numerous errors), Gábor Kiszely likewise used this one single state security source, as did Frigyes Kahler in the introductory study he wrote for the sources from the series of dossiers “Canale” published in facsimile.⁶

A change to the one-sidedness of the earlier publications was made by Csaba Szabó’s collection of sources, based on wide-ranging research, which placed the Second Vatican Council within the context of Vatican–Hungarian relations.⁷ My research in turn has unearthed and summarized the background to the assembling of the Hungarian delegation attending the Council’s first session and its activity, as well as the positions of the governments of the Socialist Bloc on the Council.⁸ In addition to the above-mentioned writings, which approach the subject primarily from the

viewpoint of political history, studies examining the Council's reception in Hungary, along with my own writing analyzing the Hungarian bishops' recommendations for the Council, deal explicitly with the Council from the perspective of church history.⁹

Nevertheless, the scarcity of specialist literature treating the history of the Hungarian presence at the Council has made fundamental—first of all—archival research indispensable in numerous areas. However, in this area, too, the possibilities are limited: that portion of the materials in the ecclesiastical archives pertaining to the period under examination (first and foremost the *Archivio Segreto Vaticano* and the diocesan archives in Hungary) overwhelmingly remain inaccessible to research. However, this still does not mean the indispensable ecclesiastical sources must be abandoned entirely. The Archive of the Second Vatican Council (*Archivio del Concilio Vaticano II*) is available to researchers, while the documents of the council preparations and sessions have already been published.¹⁰ The official positions of the Holy See, which were regularly published in the gazette *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*, further aid research. Moreover, the volumes collecting the pronouncements of the various popes also contain texts that can be considered as the unofficial Vatican position.¹¹ From the point of view of our topic the fact that the papers of Cardinal Agostino Casaroli in the Parma State Archive (*Archivio di Stato di Parma*) have recently become researchable for a while is of revolutionary importance.¹² The documents published from this rich collection of sources by Giovanni Barberini provide us with insight into the Vatican's decision-making process of the era before these materials of the Vatican Archives will be opened to research.¹³ In the Hungarian ecclesiastical context, too, numerous new collections of sources have become accessible to researchers in the recent past. In terms of our topic, the documents of the deliberations of the Bench of Bishops between 1949 and 1965, published by Margit Balogh, are the most significant.¹⁴ The sources found in the papers of József Zágon, leader of the Hungarian Catholic emigration, housed at the Saint Stephen Foundation (*Szent István Alapítvány*) in Rome, are of great use for research, as are the sources related to Mindszenty found in the files of the US Embassy in Budapest.¹⁵

Nevertheless, it is not only the relatively limited access to church sources that justifies an analysis of the history of Hungarian participation in the Council relying primarily on the documents generated by the Hungarian state

organs and preserved in the Hungarian National Archives, the Budapest City Archives and the Historical Archive of the State Security Services. Due to the strict control of the life and operations of the Hungarian Church the various party and state agencies (the organs of the HSWP, the State Office for Church Affairs, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the state security services) accumulated a very large quantity of intelligence material pertaining to the Church's internal affairs as well as the ecclesiastical leadership's activities and thinking. While keeping in mind the peculiar image of the Church, outlook and language that defines this rich source material, with the help of the documents it is possible to reconstruct not only specific events and the manipulative actions of the political regime but also the Hungarian Church's attitude to the Council and even, in numerous cases, the intentions and actions of the Holy See. By critically analyzing the sources of the party and state organs, as well as comparing them to each other and to the other sources presently available, we can thus gain a quite accurate picture of the circumstances, background and results of Hungarian participation in the Second Vatican Council even before the files become fully accessible. Naturally the (ecclesiastical) sources that become researchable later may supplement, correct or nuance this picture with new perspectives and data.

The structure of the book is determined both by the intention to examine the major factors influencing Hungarian attendance at the Council and the peculiarities stemming from the nature of the sources. The thematic perspective employed alongside the basic chronological structure (the preliminary phase of the council, the duration of the Council and overview of the post-Council period) demonstrates how the events unfolded as the combined result of the activities of the Holy See, the Hungarian state and government, and the Hungarian ecclesiastical leadership.

In the first part I will survey first Pope John XXIII's plans for the announced Council, the change in the Holy See's stance vis-à-vis Communist ideology (and specifically in the Vatican's ties to Hungary and the Hungarian Church at the turn of the 1950s and 1960s), as well as Rome's efforts to ensure Hungarian attendance at the Council. Second, I will sketch the process by which the Hungarian model of ecclesiastical policy shifted, which essentially coincided with the changes at the Vatican, as well as its bearing on foreign policy. Next, I will present how the Hungarian

Communist leadership came to permit Hungarian attendance at the Council. At the end of the first section I will provide a short description of the state in which the announcement of the Ecumenical Council reached the Hungarian Catholic Church, the expectations articulated by the Hungarian chief pastors for the impending Council, and the actions they took in order to be able to honor their obligation to attend.

In the volume's second, central part I will first summarize briefly the main elements of the teachings formulated at the Second Vatican Council as well as survey the theoretical bases and areas of the Holy See's emerging new *Ostpolitik*. Following this I will analyze in depth the role played by the Hungarian participation in the Council in the negotiations leading to a partial agreement between the Holy See and Hungary. Next I will present the means by which the government in Budapest attempted to maintain complete control over the Hungarian Church throughout the duration of the Council, as well as the way in which it strove to achieve the aims of its church policy, which it set out at the time it authorized attendance at the Council. Finally, I will examine how heavy state control influenced the internal relations and activity of the council delegation, what the Hungarian ecclesiastics contributed to the work of the Council, and how they exploited the opportunity for direct contact offered by the Council during their talks with the Holy See.

The volume closes first by surveying briefly what the Second Vatican Council contributed to the Holy See's eastern policy and Vatican–Hungarian relations. Next, I present in detail how the leaders of Hungarian church policy assessed the Council and how they sought to influence the reception of the Council's teaching in Hungary in accordance with its own interests. Finally, without undertaking an all-encompassing, comprehensive analysis of Vatican II's reception history, I summarize the results of research on the question thus far and also outline a few topics that could be suggestive for further research.

Notes

- ¹ Cf. Routhier, "Bilan," 443–68; Faggioli, "Concilio ... (2000–2002)," 335–60; Faggioli, "Concilio ... (2002–2005)," 743–67; Routhier et al., "Recherches," (2005) 613–53; Quisinsky and Routhier, "Recherches," 783–84. Routhier et al., "Recherches," (2011) 321–73; Routhier et al., "Recherches," (2013) 585–642. Perhaps the best new synthesis of the history of the Second Vatican Council is given by O'Malley, *What Happened*.
- ² Works assessing the Holy See's eastern policy, while focusing on the Vatican's perspectives, in a basically positive light (some even considering the Vatican to have had no alternative) include: Stehle, *Ostpolitik*; Stehle, *Eastern Politics*; Riccardi, *Vaticano e Mosca*; Stehle, *Geheimdiplomatie*; Trasatti, *Vatican–Kremlin*; Riccardi, "Antisovietismo," 227–68; Melloni, "Ostpolitik," 217–42; Melloni, "Politica internazionale," 3–47; Barberini, *Ostpolitik*; Lavopa, *Diplomazia*; Morozzo della Rocca, *Tra Est e Ovest*; Chenaux, *Église catholique* emphasizes the continuity discernible in Vatican diplomacy since 1789. From the viewpoint of the persecuted Church, the Holy See's *Ostpolitik* is viewed critically, to varying degrees, by: Wenger, *Les trois Rome*; Adriányi, *Geschichte*; Hummel, *Vatikanische Ostpolitik*; Luxmoore and Babiuch, *Vatican and the Red Flag*; Adriányi, *Ostpolitik*; Mackiewicz, *In the Shadow*; Pastorelli, *Santa Sede*. And by Hungarian authors: Mészáros, *Mindszenty és az »Ostpolitik«*; Szabó, "Magyarország és a Vatikán," 63–95; Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*; Tabajdi and Ungváry, *Elhallgatott múlt*, 285–311.
- ³ Of particular importance for understanding the reactions of the Central and East European states to the Council is a volume of studies summarizing the results of a 1995 conference in Moscow examining the Soviet position: Melloni, *Vatican II in Moscow*; the Holy See's diplomatic activities during the period of the Council, as well as the various governments' assessment of the Council, are summarized on the basis of wide-ranging archival research by Melloni, *Altra Roma*; as well as the works dealing with the participation of Central and East European bishops, e.g., Kłoczowski, "Évêques polonais," 165–77; Turbanti, "Contributo," 141–60; Soetens, *Vatican II et la Belgique*; Hal'ko, "Comunisti slovacchi," 166–86; Wolf

- and Arnold, *Deutschsprachigen Länder*; Fial and Jiří, *Koncil a česká společnost*; Chrenaux et al., *La Chiesa croata e il Concilio Vaticano II*.
- ⁴ Calvez, “Marxismo al Concilio,” 220–32; Carbone, “Schemi e discussioni,” 10–68; Turbanti, “Problema del comunismo,” 147–87.
 - ⁵ Máté-Tóth, “Katholisch gesehen,” 129–51; Máté-Tóth, “II. Vatikánische Konzil,” 394–404; Máté-Tóth, “II. Vatikáni Zsinat.”
 - ⁶ Kiszely, Állambiztonság, 97–143; Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 11–64.
 - ⁷ Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*.
 - ⁸ Fejérdy, “Presenza ungherese,” 85–203; Fejérdy, “Szocialista tömb,” 211–24; Fejérdy, “Hontalanok,” 59–89; Fejérdy, “Strategie,” 103–23; Fejérdy, “Regime comunista,” 256–80.
 - ⁹ Máté-Tóth, “Katholisch gesehen,” 129–51; Máté-Tóth, “II. Vatikánische Konzil,” 394–404; Gárdonyi, “Magyar Katolikus Egyház,” 25–32; Kránitz, “Magyar katolikus teológia,” 133–49; Gárdonyi, “Magyar teológusok,” 749–58, as well as Fejérdy, “Magyar javaslatok,” 548–53, and Gárdonyi, “Teológiai szempontok,” 13–26; Rétfalvi, “Kovács Sándor szombathelyi püspök,” 113–52; Tóth, “»Vigilate et orate semper!«” 153–94.
 - ¹⁰ Cf. the volumes of *Acta et documenta Concilio Oecumenico Vaticano II apparando*, and the volumes of *Acta Synodalia Sacrosancti Concilii Oecumenici Vaticani II*.
 - ¹¹ Cf. the volumes of *Discorsi, messaggi, colloqui del Santo Padre Giovanni XXIII* and Paolo VI, *Encicliche e discorsi*.
 - ¹² On the history and content of the Casaroli papers, see Agostinelli and Nironi, “Archivio Agostino Casaroli,” 345–69. The papers of Casaroli (as Fondo Casaroli) were transferred in 2015 to the Historical Archive of the Section for Relations with States of the Secretariat of State, Vatican City.
 - ¹³ Barberini, *La politica*.
 - ¹⁴ *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*. An inventory of the documents on Hungarian attendance at the Council in ecclesiastical archives: Tóth, “Magyar zsinati atyák,” 329–404. On the Council’s Diary of Norbert Legányi, archabbot of Pannonhalma see: Várszegi, “Legányi Norbert,” 217–46.
 - ¹⁵ On the files concerning Mindszenty preserved in the United States National Archives and Records Administration, see the volumes of Ádám Somorjai OSB in the bibliography.

PART I.

THE (ANTE-) PREPARATORY PHASE OF THE COUNCIL
(1959–1962)

1.

The Holy See

1.1. JOHN XXIII AND THE COUNCIL

Pope John XXIII announced the convocation of a new ecumenical council on January 25, 1959.¹ The 17 cardinals attending the consistory held in the Benedictine monastery beside the Basilica of Saint Paul Outside the Walls at the end of the week of prayer for Christian unity were surprised by the pope's announcement. It was not the idea of the Council that caused this surprise, since the completion of the work of the interrupted First Vatican Council, or the convocation of a new council, had already been raised earlier. The previous initiatives, and indeed the commenced preparations, had foundered time and again, however, because in the unfavorable international political situation the convening of the Council had appeared almost impossible.² John XXIII's announcement, made not quite one hundred days after his election (October 28, 1958), took the cardinals and the public at large by surprise precisely because as they saw it, the unfavorable conditions for convoking and carrying out a council still prevailed.

In 1959 the world continued to be divided into two politically, ideologically, socially and economically opposed blocs. Although the cold-war tensions characterizing the first half of the 1950s had eased somewhat, and the two superpowers more and more yielded to the constraints of peaceful coexistence, international relations continued to be burdened by serious conflicts. The Hungarian Revolution and disturbances in Poland in 1956—despite the appearance reinforced by propaganda—had still remained the internal affairs of the Eastern Bloc, while the Suez Crisis was more a conflict among the Western Powers than a Soviet–American clash. By contrast, the construction of the Berlin Wall in 1961, the Cuban Missile Crisis in 1962 and the escalation of the Vietnam War from 1964–1965 on represented a truly frosty period in the climate of the gradual thaw.

Beyond the confrontation of the super powers, the international political situation was characterized by conflicts of a local nature. The Near East, where the Arab states and Israel competed for possession of Palestine and control of the region, continued to be one of the prominent crisis zones. The independence aspirations of the former colonies, as well as the internal conflicts of the nascent new states, meanwhile created additional crisis zones. In the wake of the dissolution of the colonial system, the significance of the so-called “Third World” increased, not least because the socio-economic conflicts surfacing in Latin America, Africa, and Southeast Asia frequently descended into armed struggles that the Great Powers attempted to exploit to increase their own ideological, military, political, and economic influence.

In the increasingly more complicated international situation it was difficult to believe that an aged (and precisely for this reason viewed as transitional) pope would be the appropriate person to convoke a council.³ Nevertheless, the announcement of the new Council was not an ill-considered move on the part of Pope John XXIII. Although it is not possible on the basis of the available sources to reconstruct precisely how the pontiff came to reach the decision, it is obvious from his private utterances that it stemmed from an inner conviction, slowly emerging and gradually strengthening, that was organically linked to Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli’s notion of papal service.⁴ This fundamentally pastoral conception is already discernable in his homily delivered on the occasion of his coronation, when, citing the Gospel of John (Jn 10, 11–18) he emphasized his wish to be above all else a good pastor, adding: “All other human gifts and accomplishments—learning, practical experience, diplomatic finesse—can broaden and enrich pastoral work, but they cannot replace it.”⁵

In his allocution announcing the Council, taking as his starting point precisely the dual pastoral office of St. Peter’s successor (bishop of Rome and chief pastor of the universal Church) he outlined the societal and spiritual state of his diocese as well as the situation of universal humanity.⁶ His assessment attests to his awareness of the positive and negative phenomena of his age. He saw clearly the benefits that technological development represented for humanity, but at the same time it did not escape his notice either that society was increasingly becoming a slave to consumption and materialism; furthermore, that together with the ascendancy of comfort and selfishness the willingness to endure order and discipline was also waning. In

any case John XXIII comprehended these contradictory phenomena of the world as the “signs of the times,” which called for the Church’s response and inner renewal. Thus already in his allocution of January 25, 1959 he spoke of the Council from the perspective of *bonum animarum* (“the good of souls”), and he made its primarily pastoral orientation unmistakable when he called its goal “the enlightenment, edification and happiness of the whole Christian world.”

In addition to the Council’s primarily pastoral goal—even if he did not speak of this in his allocution announcing the Council—it was the pope’s fervent wish to lend the Council an ecumenical dimension. As the official communiqué published by *L’Osservatore Romano* read, the Council “not only has for its purpose in the thinking of the Holy Father, the upbuilding of the Christian people; it is also meant to be an invitation to the separated communities to join in the search for the unity for which so many yearn all around the world.”⁷ A few days later, in his address to the parish priests of Rome on January 29, this time the pontiff himself confirmed his intention to lend the coming Council an ecumenical dimension.⁸

The two major goals of the Council articulated from the very beginning by the pope took on an increasingly more concrete form throughout the entire period of preparation. Not quite half a year after the announcement of the Council the pope’s first encyclical, *Ad Petri Cathedram*, appeared. In it John XXIII once again emphasized that the Council would “consider, in particular, the growth of the Catholic faith, the restoration of sound morals among the Christian flock, and appropriate adaptation (*aggiornare*) of Church discipline to the needs and conditions of our times.”⁹ He similarly highlighted the pastoral nature of the Council in an address he delivered on the occasion of the commencement of the preparatory commissions’ work on November 14, 1960, as well as in the papal bull announcing the Council, *Humanae Salutis*, on December 25, 1961, in his radio address of September 11, 1962, and lastly, in his allocution opening the Council on October 11, when, relying on the council plan of Cardinal Archbishop Léon-Joseph Suenens of Mechelen-Brussels to define the main target areas of the Council, he employed the distinction between *ad intra* and *ad extra* to articulate the tasks stemming from the pastoral goal.¹⁰

From the pope’s above statements it is clear that the pastoral goal articulated from the outset meant for him that the Council—unlike previous

councils—had to deal not with particular questions of doctrine or discipline, but rather under changing circumstances that the essence of the Christian way of life and thought preserved and taught by the Church for centuries, had to be rearticulated in a generally comprehensible language. According to John XXIII's intent, therefore, the Council had to offer an answer to the transitional era, since the Council itself, as the Council of the transition, would assist the Church in moving from the post-Tridentine era (and, in a certain sense, from the millennium and a half of the Constantinian era) into a new era characterized by witness and proclamation. The Council would be able to fulfill this task if it preserved the essential and eternal elements of the tradition that would prove suitable even under the changing circumstances for increasing and guaranteeing faithfulness to the Gospel, and if it achieved that which the pope called “*Restauratio et renovatio universalis Ecclesiae*.”¹¹

From the outset John XXIII designated the unity of Christians as the other essential aim of the Council. At the same time, for a while it did not yet become clear what practical consequences the pope's novel concept of ecumenism would entail for the Council. This uncertainty is also palpable in the statements made by the pope in the spring of 1959, in which he advocated a continually changing stance, often in contradiction of his previous utterances. Truly, in a number of his addresses John XXIII indicated that the unity of Christianity would be restored during the Council. At the same time, on other occasions he gave voice to his view that the Council “will not immediately do away with all the divisions that exist among Christians all at once,” and that it would be the “internal” affair of the Roman Catholic Church.¹² John XXIII first expounded his views on Christian unity in detail in his encyclical *Ad Petri Cathedram*, which appeared at the end of June. Speaking of ecumenism the pope stressed more than usual how far unity had come. At the same time, knowing the historical conditions and the Church's eschatological dimension he opined that complete unity could be realized only at the end of times.

1.2. THE SUPREME PONTIFFS AND COMMUNISM

The entire priestly-diplomatic career of Pope Pius XII was characterized by confrontation with the totalitarian ideologies of the twentieth century. After the Second World War—and the defeat of Nazism—the expansion of Communism would represent perhaps the greatest challenge of his pontificate.¹³ As early as the 1930s the future pope, based on his experiences gained as Vatican secretary of state and his thorough knowledge of the theory of Marxism, had become convinced that Communism was essentially atheistic and as such at root anti-Church. Later, as pope, he advocated the view that Communism represented a worldview with which one could not and must not compromise. The 1949 decree¹⁴ of the Holy Office condemning any cooperation whatsoever with the Communists therefore was not only a specific reaction to events taking place in Eastern and Western Europe (the conviction of Cardinal Mindszenty; the attempt to establish the Czechoslovak national Church;¹⁵ as well as the growing influence of the Italian and French Communist parties) but also served broader pastoral aims: namely, it sought to provide clear guidance to the faithful regarding the dangers of Marxist ideology, which threatened the Church and indeed Christian civilization itself.

While Pius XII as a spiritual pastor emphasized the irreconcilable theoretical antagonism between Christianity and Communism, as an experienced diplomat he did not rule out the possibility of reaching a certain *modus vivendi* either. At the same time, the experiences he had obtained during his diplomatic career made it clear to him that negotiation was only permissible if dialogue occurred between equal parties, and if the negotiating partner proved through appropriate guarantees the sincerity of his intention to reach an agreement. Therefore from the early 1950s on the pope formulated two basic conditions that were necessary to ensure peaceful co-existence: the guarantee of civil liberties and of the freedom of the Church.¹⁶ At the same time, Pius XII's willingness to engage in dialogue was also indicated in his statements made barely three years after the appearance of the decree of the Holy Office on excommunication, when he recommended distinguishing between "erroneous and false" doctrines and people "worthy of mercy and love," and he raised his voice not against the regime, which was incompatible with the Christian faith, but primarily in

favor of peace and the earthly happiness of the various peoples.¹⁷ Simultaneously, he also emphasized that “the Catholic Church does not identify itself with Western culture; nor does it identify itself with any one civilization, but is prepared to form an alliance with any civilization.”¹⁸

Thus, out of the above considerations the pope did not flatly rule out relations when beginning in 1956 the Soviet Union began to send out feelers to the Holy See through more and more channels. However, so long as the regime gave no tangible sign that its hitherto hostile attitude towards the Church had changed, he regarded Soviet attempts at rapprochement merely as tactical steps. In the summer of 1956 therefore Pius XII assumed a wait-and-see posture to see if the words urging cooperation were also followed by concrete actions guaranteeing the sincerity of the negotiations.¹⁹

In the end, the bitter experience of the defeat of the Hungarian Revolution, the subsequent reprisals, and the coming of the Hungarian Church once more under strict state control proved in Pius XII's eyes that he had decided correctly when hesitating to accept the Soviet Union's attempts at rapprochement. For him, events proved that the dialogue called for at various forums was pointless not only because the two sides were separated from one another by such a great ideological chasm, but because dialogue on practical issues likewise made no sense since rapprochement was merely a tactical move on Moscow's part, of which the Holy See also could have easily become its pawn, to increase its influence in the West. This new experience of the mendacity of Soviet policy ultimately resulted in a stiffening of Pius XII's eastern policy: in his statements he reverted to the earlier harsh tone, excluded the possibility of an agreement, urged the establishment of a united front against Communism, and reacted in an unequivocally negative manner to further Soviet attempts at rapprochement.²⁰

The election of John XXIII did not represent a sharp break in the Holy See's policy on Communism. During the consistory of December 15, 1958, for instance, the new pope spoke, in language characteristic of his predecessor, of the Chinese Church divided by schism.²¹ The Holy Office's decree of 1949 likewise remained in force, though in its commentary on its renewal in 1959²² Vatican Radio called attention also to the fact that Catholics who failed to respect the precept no longer had to reckon with excommunication but only simple penalties. The April 19 issue of *L'Osservatore Romano* likewise implied that the decree did not apply primarily to the Catholics of Eastern

Europe.²³ Nor, finally, can it be overlooked in this context that it was Cardinal Domenico Tardini, now secretary of state, who would direct the Holy See's foreign policy right up until his death on July 30, 1961.²⁴

Yet from the very outset the novel elements appearing alongside signs of continuity signaled that the new pope thought about politics in general, but also about the Vatican policy towards Communism, differently than had his predecessor.²⁵ For John XXIII, the experiences of the 1956 Hungarian Revolution demonstrated that the Church would have to reckon with the long-term survival of Communist regimes. Consequently, he did not consider the previous Vatican policy, aimed at achieving complete freedom for the Catholic Church in the region, to be feasible. Thus, instead of striving, like Pius XII, to radically alter the *status quo*, he was tacitly prepared to acknowledge the role of the Communist governments in controlling and influencing the Church and considered the attainment of partial results to be the sole rational aim.²⁶

The signs of a more conciliatory eastern policy towards the Communist system can be discerned already in John XXIII's first encyclical. In the document *Ad Petri Cathedram*, dated June 29, 1959, the pontiff did condemn what he termed "a contempt for truth and reckless rejection of it," warning against all errors "which enter the recesses of men's hearts and the bloodstream of human society as would a plague," and instructing Christians to beware of those erroneous opinions that the Holy See had always condemned.²⁷ Moreover, the encyclical, in harmony with the basic principles of the Church's social doctrine expounded by Leo XIII, came to the defense of private property and insisted that the existence of social classes conformed to natural law. Nevertheless, while continuing to use the expression "Church of Silence" introduced by Pius XII in reference to the East European churches, the pope's mention of forgiveness in connection with Communism may be regarded as a complete novelty in Vatican usage: "We do not want to offend anyone. On the contrary, We are ready to forgive all freely and to beg this forgiveness of God."²⁸

Pope John XXIII expounded the theoretical basis of his new eastern policy only in his final encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*,²⁹ but the encyclical *Mater et Magistra*, issued on May 15, 1961 to commemorate the seventieth anniversary of *Rerum Novarum*, also formed an important station in the evolution of his social doctrine. In this document John XXIII in fact

repeated previous popes' condemnations of Communism and Socialism, mentioning at the end of the encyclical the severe persecutions of Christians and "refined barbarity of the oppressors" as some of the troubling phenomena of the era, and condemning moreover the erroneous opinion that religion was an impediment to progress. Nonetheless, in reformulating the Church's social doctrine, taking into consideration the radical societal changes of the previous decades, he came quite close to the socialist position that proclaimed the fundamental connection between equality and peace and declared social and economic development as a basic condition of human rights. Not only was the proclaiming of equality and justice music to the ears of the "socialist camp" but so was the condemnation of the arms race as well. In addition, *Mater et Magistra*—while recognizing the erroneous nature of Communism—spoke of it as merely one of the errors of its era. Pope John XXIII did not underestimate the challenge of Communism; nevertheless, in relativizing its significance by aligning it with the other errors of the age, he cleared the way for a new type of political practice.

With the question of Communism no longer occupying a central place in his thinking, John XXIII no longer appraised the Soviets' proposals for peace and disarmament as part of a strategy whose only goal was to catch the West off guard. He believed in fact that a nation that had lost twenty million people in the last world war must sincerely desire peace.³⁰ This new kind of attitude, present also in *Mater et Magistra*, was received with great satisfaction in Moscow, which was now pursuing a more pragmatic foreign policy compared to the Stalinist era.³¹ Recognizing the changes that had transpired in the geopolitical realm,³² Nikita Sergeevich Khrushchev at the Twenty-Second Congress of the CPSU in October 1961 had designated "peaceful coexistence" as the Soviet Union's chief foreign-policy aim. And it was not only the anti-war movements appearing in the United States and Western Europe that could promote the achievement of the new Soviet foreign-policy aims: increasingly the Kremlin also counted on the support of the Catholic Church, led by its "anti-Western" new pope.³³ Previously Khrushchev had perceived John XXIII's conduct in the tense international situation arising at the time of the construction of the Berlin Wall to be such support.³⁴ When the Americans responded to the construction of the Wall (August 12–13, 1961), meant to thwart Germans from fleeing to the West, by renewing atomic

experiments, and the outbreak of a new war did not seem out of the question, in an address delivered in Castelgandolfo on September 10, 1961 on the occasion of the Belgrade conference of the so-called “Non-Aligned Countries” (first convened in Bandung in 1955) the pontiff has spoken out in favor of disarmament.³⁵

1.3. THE HOLY SEE AND HUNGARY

When Pope John XXIII announced his wish to convoke an ecumenical council, the Holy See had virtually no relations of any kind with Hungary or the Hungarian Catholic Church. Diplomatic relations had ceased as early as the end of the Second World War; on April 4, 1945 the papal nuncio, Angelo Rotta, who had remained in his post during the period of the Szálasi government, was expelled from the country. Following this, Hungarian bishops were last allowed to visit Rome in September 1948; beginning in 1949, following the Mindszenty trial and the formation of the one-party system, the opportunities for the Hungarian Church to maintain formal ties with the Holy See (viewed by the regime as a political enemy) practically ceased to exist. Cut off by the Iron Curtain, from this time on the Hungarian Church—apart from the brief period of the 1956 Revolution—could make contact with the Holy See only via informal or “illegal” channels.

In the eyes of Rome, obtaining information through the existing diplomatic missions seemed the least risky alternative. Within the Holy See’s own diplomatic network, in lieu of a nunciature in Hungary it fell to Vienna, the nunciature located closest to the “Iron Curtain,” to try and collect data, as circumstances allowed, about the Hungarian Church. At present we do not possess precise knowledge about the sources from which the nunciature in Vienna obtained the (apparently often erroneous, or at least one-sided³⁶) information that it forwarded to the Vatican. It may be assumed, however, that, aside from the wife of the French minister to Budapest, Jean Paul-Boncourt,³⁷ its informants included two Austrian citizens, Hildegard Steiger,³⁸ who remained in touch with Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár (whom the state viewed highly reactionary); and Maria Bramberger, a resident of Vienna who smuggled information about the Bishopric of Győr out of the country.³⁹

Naturally, the Holy See anticipated that the information of the Viennese nunciature might be in many respects inaccurate or at least incidental and therefore one-sided. For this reason it attempted also to obtain intelligence from other sources inside Hungary. In doing so it relied in particular on the Budapest embassies of the traditionally Catholic countries (above all Italy and France),⁴⁰ but Hungarian ecclesiastics likewise attempted on occasion to use the employees of other embassies to get messages out.⁴¹ Whereas the official reports prepared by the Italian and French embassies provided information primarily about the general state of church policy and the major national events of the recent past, the messages they (and other embassies) transmitted supplemented the picture with information mostly of a local character.

In addition to the information variously obtained via the embassies, a vital source of intelligence for the Holy See were the Hungarian émigré priests in Rome, who regularly received news from home. Based on the currently available sources, it is Prelate József Zágon's in this area that can be best documented.⁴² There is no doubt, however, that other Hungarian priests living in Rome and working in Vatican offices played similarly important roles in gathering and evaluating reports and briefing the Holy See. The reports compiled based on information gained from correspondence with local church figures, as well as through tourists leaving Hungary, were particularly useful to the Holy See because those preparing them knew not only the language but also the Hungarian Church intimately, and were thus less prone to commit major errors.⁴³

Besides the above sources of information, beginning in the late spring of 1959 the Holy See gained additional intelligence through a peculiar new channel. Perceiving John XXIII's political thinking to be more open than his predecessor's, the Hungarian government following the earlier example of the Soviet Union sought to increase its international prestige greatly damaged after 1956, by potentially establishing relations with the Holy See. In order to feel out the Vatican's intentions and support the new pope's policy of greater openness towards Communist governments, they arranged to have Miklós Esty travel to Rome. On the invitation of Piarist Superior General Vince Tomek, the lay papal chamberlain visited Rome between May 25 and June 13, 1959, where, aside from his host, he had an opportunity to consult with Angelo Rotta, Carlo Grano, Lajos Kada, József Zágon, István Mester and, on the way there, the apostolic nuncio to Austria, Giovanni Battista Delle Piane,

and Antal Leopold.⁴⁴ At the same time, through the Hungarian-born Canon János K. Tóth, the information intended by the Hungarian government about the situation and possible options of the Hungarian Church must have reached the pope as well. Tóth briefed the master of the papal chamber, Mario Nasalli-Rocca di Corneliano, about the information obtained from Esty. Nasalli-Rocca in turn almost certainly passed his intelligence on to the pope, to whom, by virtue of his office, he reported daily.⁴⁵

Based on the information gathered through various channels (regarding, among other things, the Central Seminary in Budapest, the bishops' oath of loyalty to the state, the peace priest movement and Legal Edict No. 22 of 1957), in 1959 the Holy See deemed the situation of the Hungarian Church quite grave and increasingly began to fear that a schism similar to the Chinese could take place in Hungary also if the Hungarian bishops, disregarding Vatican measures, concluded agreements with the government.⁴⁶

While a good number of the curial cardinals, concurring with the policy of Pius XII, urged condemnation of the attacks on the Church (and succeeded to the extent that the pope, in addition to criticizing the situation in China, mentioned separately the grievances afflicting the Church in Hungary in his address of May 17, 1959),⁴⁷ John XXIII saw establishing contact with the Hungarian bishops and, through them, the state leadership, as the solution. Therefore, as early as February 8, 1959 the pope through his secretary of state invited the Hungarian bishops in an urgent letter to visit Rome. After a lengthy hesitation, however, the Hungarian government decided that it was "not timely" for the bishops to travel.⁴⁸

Even though his first attempt to make contact failed, John XXIII did not abandon his effort to enter into direct, legal contact with the Hungarian clergy. Simultaneously, more and more of the Curia's employees, fearing the danger of a loosening of relations between the Hungarian Catholic hierarchy and Rome, supported the pope's more open policy, which took greater note of the socialist regime. It is perhaps also in connection with Miklós Esty's above mentioned mission that beginning in the summer of 1959 the Holy See ceased airing the church's grievances: thus, for example, it made no mention of the fact that its decrees sent to Hungary were not being enforced, and it tolerated the strengthening of the peace priest movement relatively patiently, the placing of excommunicated priests in office and the loyal

behavior of certain members of the episcopate towards the state.⁴⁹ While the Vatican attempted to win the government's confidence by displaying this "indulgent attitude" towards Hungarian church policy, it continued to press for the bishops' visit to Rome through all possible means. For instance, throughout 1961 the Holy See indirectly, through the president of the Italian–Hungarian interparliamentary group, the Christian Democrat Senator Pier Carlo Restagno, made repeated inquiries. At the request of Angelo Dell'Acqua, the substitute for General Affairs of the Secretariat of State, Restagno tried to obtain permission for a few Hungarian Catholic bishops to visit Rome.⁵⁰

1.4. EFFORTS TO ENSURE HUNGARIAN PARTICIPATION IN THE COUNCIL

Even despite the negative signs Pope John XXIII did not abandon the goal of seeing the ecclesiastics of the Eastern Bloc, including the Hungarian bishops, attend the Council. For, beyond the fact that the approaching Council seemed to be the most suitable opportunity for establishing direct contacts with the Hungarian hierarchy, their presence in the greatest numbers possible was necessary also to ensure the universality of the Council. Therefore, encouraged by Khrushchev's birthday telegram and the news arriving from the nunciature in Turkey,⁵¹ as well as the positive signs received from the patriarch of Moscow through the Dominican Christophe-Jean Dumont,⁵² in March 1962 the pope initiated semi-official feelers through the apostolic internuncio to Turkey, Msgr. Francesco Lardone, in order to obtain Moscow's consent.

Following the pope's instructions, Lardone soon established ties with the Soviet minister to Turkey, Nikita Semenovich Ryzhov and, through him, with the other diplomats of the Socialist Bloc.⁵³ While the Soviet minister brought him Moscow's (positive⁵⁴) reply as early as April 11, the diplomats of the East European states, despite repeated queries, did not respond to inquiries about the possibility of attending the Council. In the case of Hungary, it is known that Lardone first inquired at the Hungarian embassy two weeks after learning the Soviet position, on April 30, 1962, whether the Hungarians—including Cardinal József Mindszenty—would be allowed to take part in the Council. However, having received no reply then he returned on May 25 and June 6;

nonetheless he failed to ascertain the Hungarian government's position on these latter two occasions as well.⁵⁵

In view of the time remaining before the Council opened in the fall, and lacking an unequivocal response, in the late spring of 1962 the Holy See began exploring other options that would allow the Hungarian bishops to attend. Shortly after the internuncio to Turkey failed to obtain a reply as to whether the Hungarian bishops would be allowed to travel to the Council, even though the Council's Central Preparatory Commission considered the attendance of the Hungarian, Czechoslovak, and Baltic bishops unlikely,⁵⁶ the council invitations were nevertheless sent to Hungary in multiple stages. First, in late May, almost as a trial of sorts, an invitation was sent solely to Endre Hamvas, bishop of Csanád and chairman of the Hungarian Bench of Catholic Bishops.⁵⁷ This was followed in the first half of June by invitations sent to the eight bishops in office permitted to exercise their functions: Bishops Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár, Miklós Dudás of Hajdúdorog, Sándor Kovács of Szombathely, Kálmán Papp of Győr and Endre Hamvas of Csanád, as well as to the auxiliary Bishops Vince Kovács of Vác, Imre Szabó of Esztergom and Imre Kisberk of Székesfehérvár.⁵⁸

Despite having sent the invitations, whether the leaders of the Holy See would be able to secure the East European (including the Hungarian) bishops' participation remained questionable. The importance of the question is indicated by the fact that in the summer of 1962 two committees dealt with the issue. One committee, led by the Archbishop Salvatore Baldassarri of Ravenna and operating at the headquarters of the *Azione Cattolica* in Rome, included East European émigré priests and examined in separate subcommittees the ecclesiastical political situation of the various countries, attempting thus to assess whether the East European bishops' attendance at the Council was possible.⁵⁹

Beyond ensuring the attendance of the East Europeans, the question of whether to invite the impeded bishops was raised as a separate issue. According to the intelligence of the state security organs, the issue was discussed by a group of cardinals at a secret conference held in the first half of June.⁶⁰ After the unsuccessful feelers the attendees at the meeting feared that apart from a few East German and Polish bishops not a single bishop would receive permission from the Soviet Bloc to attend the Council. Cardinal Agostino Bea pointed first of all to the danger that even if a few

bishops were allowed out of the country, there was no guarantee that they would be allowed to return to their countries freely. Cardinal Giovanni Battista Montini by contrast was of the opinion that, once allowed out of the country, the bishops themselves would be the ones who would no longer wish to return home. For this reason Cardinal William Godfrey raised the idea of holding a separate session for the impeded bishops at a place they could easily go to, and from where they could afterwards return home without trouble.⁶¹ However, Cardinal Julius August Döpfner rejected the English cardinal's idea by arguing that by holding such a separate session the Holy See would create the appearance that it was seeking to organize an "anti-Communist congress." Cardinal Francis Joseph Spellman finally put forth the recommendation that a place on the Council be reserved for every East European bishop, and if any bishop was not allowed out of the country by his government, the empty seat should bear a sign reading: "impeded." According to the American cardinal, a convinced anti-Communist, this gesture could achieve a significant psychological effect worldwide. The available source does not reveal what stance the conference took regarding Spellman's suggestion. What is known in any case is that everyone agreed with that part of the recommendation which stated that invitations to the Council must be sent to all bishops of the world, including the impeded ones: how to determine who should attend the Council would now depend on the situation of each episcopate.⁶² At the same time, a possible solution was also mentioned: should the East European bishops not be allowed to leave for the Council, the pope could authorize the prelates living in exile (in the case of the Hungarians, József Zágon, "reggente" of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute) to represent the episcopates of their respective countries as apostolic visitors.⁶³

In accordance with the resolution of the cardinals' conference, in late August the Council's Preparatory Commission therefore once again sent out invitations to all of the Hungarian bishops: this time, however, the addressees included not only the eight bishops in office but the impeded József Mindszenty, József Pétery, Bertalan Badalik, Mihály Endrey, János Bárd, and István Zadravecz as well.⁶⁴ Finally, in September the Holy See also sent invitations to the Council to two other Hungarian bishops, Gellért Belon and József Winkler, who had been appointed but not recognized by the state and thus still awaited their consecration.⁶⁵

Among the impeded bishops Cardinal Mindszenty's attendance at the Council represented a separate issue for the Holy See. Following American initiatives, a plan was raised to resolve the matter of the "guest," who was becoming more and more embarrassing for the United States, by inviting the cardinal to the Council.⁶⁶ However, the Holy See would have been willing to support Mindszenty's departure only under certain conditions. During a conference held in early 1962 the curial cardinals articulated four such conditions: that the Hungarian government make the filling of the vacant episcopal sees possible; that it permit the reorganization of the Hungarian hierarchy; that it agree to permit the Holy See to appoint freely the archbishop of Esztergom; and that it not obstruct the implementation of ecclesiastical punitive sanctions brought against the peace priests.⁶⁷ After such antecedents the Holy See, first through the internuncio to Turkey and then although the Hungarian embassy in Rome, inquired once more whether the Hungarian government would consent to allow Mindszenty to travel. On June 25, 1962 the Hungarian embassy in Rome was even forwarded a proposal stating that if Mindszenty were allowed to leave the country, he would be kept at the Vatican and placed in a curial post.⁶⁸ However, after weighing the issue the Hungarian government did not consider it opportune for Mindszenty to travel.⁶⁹

Following the failure of the semi-official feelers through diplomatic channels and the analysis of the committees within the Curia analyzing the possibility of the bishops' attendance at the Council, within the leading circles of the Holy See the opinion that not even the Second Vatican Council would provide an avenue for establishing direct contacts with the Hungarian Church increasingly gained strength. For this reason, in the summer of 1962 they began to seek new opportunities to obtain direct and verifiable information about Hungary.⁷⁰ The trip of Cardinal Franz König, archbishop of Vienna, to Hungary was mentioned as one such possible channel.⁷¹ To prepare the way for this, the Austrian cardinal sent a letter through his former schoolmate, the canon of the Lateran Basilica, János K. Tóth, to the papal chamberlain Miklós Esty, the lay president of the Saint Stephen Society (*Szent István Társulat*), asking whether his plan to visit the chairman of the Bench of Hungarian Bishops, Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád, was feasible.⁷² The Hungarian party leadership recommended Esty point out in his reply: to his knowledge the state authorities raised no objections to

foreigners entering Hungary, and therefore König should turn to the Hungarian embassy in Vienna with his request. Nonetheless, in the end the Austrian cardinal's visit to Hungary did not occur prior to the start of the Council.

Thus, for the Holy See whether bishops would be allowed to attend the Council from Hungary remained dubious until the last minute. At the cardinals' conference held in the first half of the summer only the attendance of the Polish and East German bishops had been considered likely. By the end of summer it had become certain that the Yugoslav and Bulgarian bishops would also be allowed to travel to the Council. At the same time, based on the information of the nunciature in Vienna, the possibility that Kádár would permit "a select group of Hungarian bishops to travel to Rome" was not ruled out either.⁷³ It was possibly so: it served to support the Hungarian government's intention in this regard that on September 22, 1962, the director general of Italian radio and television, Ettore Bernabei, a member of the left-leaning Italian Prime Minister Amintore Fanfani's circle, called on the minister to Rome, Gyula Simó, to say that the Holy See was prepared to send a message to Cardinal Mindszenty through Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád, after which the Hungarian primate would not hesitate to leave Hungary.⁷⁴ Inside the Vatican it was almost certainly believed by holding out the prospect of resolving the Mindszenty question, which was becoming more and more vexing to the Hungarian government, Budapest would more easily consent to the Hungarian bishops' participation in the Council.

For John XXIII and his circle the primary concern was to ensure that, even at the cost of compromise, a handful of bishops from Hungary also be allowed to attend the Council, and thus ensure its universality, as well as establishing direct contact with the Hungarian Church. However, the "conservative-minded" cardinals, who continued to represent a serious force within the Curia, in a manner characteristic of the era of Pope Pius XII considered any kind of compromise improper. Their position, according to the Hungarian state security organs, was articulated by Secretary of State Cardinal Amleto Giovanni Cicognani as follows: if the governments claimed the right to select the bishops to be sent to Rome, then the latter would be the representatives not of the benches of bishops but rather of the governments. Therefore the bishops arriving from the socialist countries should be allowed to take part

in the Council as well only in the event that all turned up—without restriction.⁷⁵

These debates within the Curia in any case remained on a theoretical plane: the Holy See truly until the last minute lacked reliable information about whether ultimately any bishops would be allowed to come to the Council from Hungary, and if so, how many. Behind the Hungarian government's silence Rome suspected rejection. Thus, up until the start of the Council they considered it more likely that there would be no opportunity to establish direct contact with the Hungarian hierarchy at the Council either. In the face of these negative expectations, in the end it came as a surprise both within the Curia and among the broader (church) public when Budapest granted permission for a council delegation of limited numbers to travel.⁷⁶

Notes

- ¹ “Allocuzione del Santo Padre Giovanni XXIII con la quale annunzia il Sinodo Romano, il Concilio Ecumenico e l’aggiornamento del Codice di diritto canonico” (January 25, 1959), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 51 (1959): 68; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. I, 1–2, 13.
- ² The convocation of a council had been planned previously by Pope Pius XI between 1923 and 1924, and later by his successor between 1948 and 1951. Whereas Pius XI got only as far as asking the bishops’ opinion, Pope Pius XII set up the appropriate preparatory commissions as well. In the end, however, both pontiffs abandoned the plan. Caprile, “Pio XII,” 209–27; Uginet, “Projet de concile général,” 65–78.
- ³ Fejérdy, “Presenza ungherese,” 127; Melloni, *Altra Roma*, 37–42.
- ⁴ *History of Vatican II*, Vol. I, 6, 12–13; Martina, *Storia della Chiesa*, 296. In addition to comments made in private, we know of a single instance when John XXIII consulted with one of his colleagues on the matter: on January 20, 1959 Secretary of State Cardinal Tardini approved his program in its entirety: the Roman Synod, the Ecumenical Council, and the updating of the Code of Canon Law.
- ⁵ “Homilia Summi Pontificis in die Coronationis” (November 4, 1959), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 50 (1958): 886; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. I, 10; and Martina, *Storia della Chiesa*, 295; *Encyclicals and Other Messages of John XXIII*, 17.
- ⁶ “Allocuzione del Santo Padre Giovanni XXIII con la quale annuncia il Sinodo Romano, il Concilio Ecumenico e l’aggiornamento del Codice di diritto canonico” (January 25, 1959), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 51 (1959): 65–69; *History of Vatican II*, Vol I, 14; *Encyclicals and Other Messages of John XXIII*, 20–23.
- ⁷ *L’Osservatore Romano*, January 26–27, 1959 cited in *History of Vatican II*, Vol. I, 33.
- ⁸ *History of Vatican II*, Vol I, 37.
- ⁹ Ioannes PP XXIII, “Litterae encyclicae *Ad Petri cathedram* de veritate, unitate et pace caritatis afflatu provehendis,” (June 29, 1959.) *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 51 (1959): 497–531, no. 33. English version: ; *Encyclicals and Other Messages of John XXIII*, 37.

- ¹⁰ “Allocutio Ioannis PP. XXIII ad concilia coetusque Concilio Vaticano II apparando” (November 14, 1960), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 52 (1960): 1005–14; Ioannes PP. XXIII, “Constitutio Apostolica Humanae Salutis” (December 25, 1961), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 54 (1962): 5–13; “Radiomessaggio del Santo Padre Giovanni XXIII ai fedeli di tutto il mondo a un mese dal concilio ecumenico Vaticano II” (September 11, 1962), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 54 (1962): 678–85; “Allocutio Ioannis PP. XXIII in sollemni SS. Concilii inauguratione” (October 11, 1962), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 54 (1962): 786–96.
- ¹¹ “In festo Cathedrae S. Petri” (February 22, 1962), *Acta et Documenta. Series II, Vol. I, Pars II*, 170.
- ¹² *History of Vatican II*, Vol I, 37–40.
- ¹³ According to the French minister accredited to the Holy See, Wladimir d’Ormesson, it was no less than “this gigantic revolution occurring in part of this world—and the Old World—that represents the Holy See’s single and greatest worry. Beside it every other problem appears secondary, not to say, trifling.” Telegram of French minister Wladimir d’Ormesson, February 12, 1949, quoted in: Chenu, *Pie XII*, 352.
- ¹⁴ The Holy Office’s decree against Communism was dated June 28, 1949 and published in the *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* on July 1. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 41 (1949): 334.
- ¹⁵ The Czechoslovak schismatic Actio Catholica had already been condemned by the Holy Office in a separate decree on June 20, 1949. The document is published in Suprema Sacra Congregatio S. Officii, “Decretum. Schismatica »Actio Catholica« in Cecoslovachia damnatur” (June 20, 1949), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 41 (1949): 333. The circumstances surrounding the issuing of the decree are described in detail by Hal’ko, *Csehszlovák szakadár Katolikus Akció*, 153.
- ¹⁶ The apostolic letter *Carissimis Russiae populis*, addressed to the Russian people, articulated this as follows: “that all people may be governed not by the force of arms but by the majesty of the law; and that each of them [be] in possession of due civil and religious liberty within the confines of its own homeland.” Pius PP. XII, “Epistula Apostolica ad universos Russiae Populos” (July 7, 1952), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 44 (1952): 509.
- ¹⁷ Cf. Fejérdy, “XII. Piusz,” 68.
- ¹⁸ Pius PP. XII, “Epistula ad Iosephum Freundorfer, Episcopum Augustanum Vindelicorum, ob Commemorationem post dena saecula S. Udalrici, Augustani Episcopi, auctoris victoriae a christianis apud »Lechfeld« relatae” (June 27, 1955), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 47 (1955): 596.
- ¹⁹ Fejérdy, “XII. Piusz,” 68–73.
- ²⁰ *Ibid*, 77–78.

- ²¹ “Consistorium Secretum. Allocutio Ioannis PP. XXIII” (December 14, 1958), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 51 (1959): 5–12; *History of Vatican II*, Vol I, 398–99.
- ²² The confirmation of the 1949 decree: Suprema Sacra Congregatio S. Officii, “Dubium” (April 4, 1959), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 51 (1959): 271–72.
- ²³ *L’Osservatore Romano*, April 19, 1959. The article commenting upon the decree of the Holy Office, entitled “Un atto chiarificatore” (An Act of Clarification), put it thus: “We want to speak not only of those nations in which the Communist terror seeks to force Catholics to commit acts contrary to their conscience (in this connection one can ask whether in these countries we can truly speak of free elections); but we speak above all of those free countries where movements have come into existence which—while calling themselves Christian—have fallen into the cunning trap of cooperation with the Communists.” Cf. also: Luxmoore and Babiuch, *Vatican and the Red Flag*, 111. On the Italian domestic background to the 1959 confirmation of the Holy Office’s decree, see: Mackiewicz, *In the Shadow*, 14–17.
- ²⁴ John XXIII immediately after his election as pontiff made Tardini secretary of state, among other reasons because he himself was unfamiliar with the curial environment and needed someone who would initiate him into its labyrinthine conditions. Moreover, by engaging Tardini (who had formerly thought little of the diplomatic abilities of Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli, not a graduate of the *Accademia*), he also prevented him from becoming a potential opponent. Instead, he became a loyal colleague: Martina, *Storia della Chiesa*, 295.
- ²⁵ Ibid, 305.
- ²⁶ The striking similarity between the situational assessment of the new Vatican eastern policy beginning with John XXIII and the reassessment by the United States of its policy towards East-Central Europe in the wake of the 1956 Revolution inspires a closer examination of the interconnections. From László Borhi’s thorough research it is known that the USA, based on the experience of 1956, abandoned its earlier strategy, which had been aimed at restoring the independence of the Central and East European countries, and from the late 1950s on regarded only the relative independence of these states within the Soviet Bloc to be a realistic goal. Borhi, *Magyar-amerikai*, 74–77.
- ²⁷ *Ad Petri Cathedram*, no. 4; *Encyclicals and Other Messages of John XXIII*, 25.
- ²⁸ *Ad Petri Cathedram*, no. 72; *Encyclicals and Other Messages of John XXIII*, 53. For an evaluation of the encyclical see also: Luxmoore and Babiuch, *Vatican and the Red Flag*, 110–11.
- ²⁹ See below, Part II, chapter 1.3.1, “The theoretical bases of the emerging eastern policy.”
- ³⁰ *History of Vatican II*, Vol I, 401.

- ³¹ Roccucci, "Russian Observers," 45–69, 48.
- ³² It was not only the formation of NATO in 1955 and the rearmament of West Germany that had a braking effect on Soviet expansionism. Because of the break with China, Communism worldwide had become divided, and this also played an increasingly large role. Under these circumstances war with the West was less and less seen as inevitable, and thus Soviet foreign policy now no longer proclaimed "peaceful coexistence" exclusively for propaganda reasons.
- ³³ Luxmoore and Babiuch, *Vatican and the Red Flag*, 113.
- ³⁴ In an interview given to *Pravda*, Khrushchev reacted to the pope's address delivered in connection with the crisis as follows: "John XXIII pays tribute to reason when he warns governments against a widespread catastrophe and exhorts them to realize the immense responsibility they have to history. His pleas is a good sign. In our age, given the existence of utterly destructive means of slaughtering people, it is inadmissible to play with the destiny of nations." Quoted in: *History of Vatican II*, Vol I, 401–402.
- ³⁵ "Radiomessaggio del Santo Padre Giovanni XXIII a tutto il mondo per la concordia delle genti e la tranquillità nella famiglia umana" (September 10, 1961), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 53 (1961): 577–82.
- ³⁶ For example, Vince Tomek, the Hungarian-born Piarist superior general, with outstanding connections in the Vatican, likewise confirmed the data-gathering activities of the nunciature in Vienna to the papal chamberlain, Miklós Esty, an agent of Hungarian state security codenamed "Pátkai." At Tomek's invitation Esty visited Rome between May 25 and June 13, 1959. Traveling on state orders, Esty at the same time related in his report that the information arriving through Vienna contained quite a few errors. Report on the trip to Rome of agent "Pátkai," Budapest, June 23, 1959. ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs–2/1. "Hontalanok," 207.
- ³⁷ Report on the intelligence activities of the French embassy in Budapest, Budapest, April 28, 1961. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–11 522/3. "Kizártak," 62–67.
- ³⁸ Report of agent "Aspiráns," Budapest, October 16, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/1. "Canale," 289–90.
- ³⁹ Report on the visit of Maria Bramberger to the bishop of Győr, Budapest, July 10, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/3. "Canale," 17.
- ⁴⁰ Fejérdy, "Hontalanok," 60–61.
- ⁴¹ For example, Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár was suspected by the state organs of trying to get information out of the country through the Swedish attaché as well as the secretary at the Dutch embassy. Cf. Report of agent "Doktor," Székesfehérvár, August 4, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/3. "Canale," 40–41.
- ⁴² On Zágón's life and activity see: Németh, "Mons. József Zágón," 119–60.
- ⁴³ Fejérdy, "Hontalanok," 61–62.

- ⁴⁴ Report on the trip to the Vatican of “Pátkay,” Budapest, June 19, 1959. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–13 405/3–b. “Magyar Római Katolikus Püspöki Kar,” 290–92.
- ⁴⁵ Report on the trip to Rome of agent “Pátkai,” Budapest, June 23, 1959. ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs–2/1. “Hontalanok,” 194–215.
- ⁴⁶ Lőrinc Soós, chargé d'affaires to the foreign minister, Rome, July 22, 1959. MNL-OL XIX–J–1–j. Olaszország. 4/c–004969/1959.
- ⁴⁷ In his address delivered in Saint Peter’s Basilica Pope John XXIII mentioned in connection with the situation in Hungary the case of the interned bishops (among them Mindszenty), the bishops’ lack of freedom to administer their dioceses and the hindering of seminary training. He objected to the state’s use of excommunicated priests for its own aims, and expressed his fear that the state authority, in order to justify the “abnormal situation,” would demand something of the chief pastors that their conscience could not accept; *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 51 (1959): 421. Based on information obtained from circles close to the Vatican, the interpretation of this comment at the Hungarian embassy in Rome was “that the pope had spoken about the analogous situation of the Church in China and Hungary jointly because it is feared that the Catholic bishops of the two countries have rebelled against the Vatican’s measures and had concluded agreements with the government as they saw fit, ignoring the Holy See,” but it is likely that the mention of government demands unacceptable to the conscience pertained to the peace priest movement and declarations recognizing the regime. Cf. Lőrinc Soós, chargé d'affaires to the foreign minister, Rome, July 22, 1959. MNL-OL XIX–J–1–j. Olaszország. 4/c–004969/1959.
- ⁴⁸ Cf. Fejérdy, “Aux origines,” 399–411.
- ⁴⁹ Report on the Catholic Church-state relations, Budapest, January 30, 1960. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1960/5. ő. e. 23–31. Regarding the loyal conduct of the Bench of Bishops, the Piarist Superior General Vince Tomek, who had excellent Vatican connections, for example as early as June 1959 sent word through Miklós Esty to the Hungarian bishops not to fear an official visit to Rome, because not even in this event did they have to expect a major condemnation. Cf. Report on the trip to the Vatican of “Pátkay,” Budapest, June 19, 1959. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–13 405/3–b. “Canale,” 290–92.
- ⁵⁰ Report of Ambassador Gyula Simó on the Soviet–Vatican relations, Rome, October 10, 1961. MNL-OL XIX–J–1–j. Olaszország. 5/b–007648/1961.
- ⁵¹ The pope appraised the Soviet leader’s telegram, sent on November 25, 1961 for John XXIII’s eightieth birthday, as a divine sign. Cf. Riccardi, *Vaticano e Mosca*, 223–224; Gaiduk, “Vaticano e Cremlino,” 25. From the very beginning the pope devoted marked attention to news of his former posting, the nunciature in Ankara. He maintained direct contact with Msgr. Lardone, bypassing the Secretariat of State, thus he did not fail to notice that the Soviet and East European diplomats

- were approaching the Holy See's representative in Turkey in a new, respectful way. Cf. Riccardi, *Vaticano e Mosca*, 233–34.
- ⁵² Aleksii Buevskii's letter to Christophe-Jean Dumont, February 28, 1962, quoted in: Roccucci, "Russian Observers," 58.
- ⁵³ Lardone's memoir, written in 1971, is quoted in: Tuninetti, *Monsignor Francesco Lardone*, 94.
- ⁵⁴ Entrusted by John XXIII with inquiring through the Soviet minister to Ankara, Nikita Semenovich Ryzhov, Internuncio Lardone as early as April 11, 1962 had informed Secretary of State Amleto Giovanni Cicognani that the Catholic bishops of the Soviet Union would be allowed to attend the Council. According to the testimony of the Russian archives, by contrast, Soviet minister Ryzhov received no information regarding this from his superiors. Based on the hopes of the Holy See, Lardone probably interpreted the presumably ambiguous reply more positively than was justified. In the end not one Catholic bishop was present at the Council's first session because Moscow authorized only Bishop Petras Mazelis of Telšiai to travel; he, however, in light of his age and state of health, stayed home. Krassikov, "Second Vatican Council," 323. In the end two vicars capitular traveled from Lithuania: Barberini, *La politica*, 29.
- ⁵⁵ Proposal to the Politburo in the Mindszenty Case, Budapest, August 4, 1962. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 274. ő. e. 92. Cf. Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 24.
- ⁵⁶ Information material prepared by the Polish state security organs, June 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 213. At the same time, other information indicated that the Holy See still held out hope for the East European bishops' attendance at the Council. For example, according to one report the Vatican planned to set up a welcome bureau in Vienna headed by Cardinal König for those arriving from the socialist countries. Report on the meeting of the Council's Central Preparatory Commission, Budapest, May 24, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 137.
- ⁵⁷ Endre Hamvas, bishop of Csanád to József Prantner, chairman of the State Office for Church Affairs (not sent), Szeged, May 24, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-9/1962, and Report on the Vatican policy and the Ecumenical Council, Budapest, June 26, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-7/1962. 8-9.
- ⁵⁸ Report on the council invitations received by the Hungarian bishops, Budapest, August 19, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 251. Although we know that the eight invitations had arrived in Hungary by June 22, 1962,—because of the censor—the letters in actuality often reached the bishops only much later. Cf. Report on the council invitations arrived to the leaders of the Hungarian Catholic Church, Budapest, June 30, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 171. For example, Lajos Shvoy, regarded as "reactionary" by the state, was delivered the

invitation only on July 19, 1962. Lajos Shvoy to Endre Hamvas, July 21, 1962, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 56. On the invitations see also: Report on the Vatican policy and the Ecumenical Council, Budapest, June 26, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-7/1962.

- ⁵⁹ Summary report between the end of June and beginning of August 1962, ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 406.
- ⁶⁰ The Vatican’s policy and the Ecumenical Council (1962), ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 361–63. Deputy Interior Minister József Galambos sent a copy of the document to the chairman of the ÁEH, József Prantner, on June 26, 1962, but we know also that it was incorporated into a summary report sent to the Czechoslovak state security organs as well. From the date the report was sent to the ÁEH we may conclude that the bishops’ conference must have taken place sometime in the first half of June. Cf. Report on the Vatican policy and the Ecumenical Council, Budapest, June 26, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-7/1962; also: Hal’ko, “Magyar és csehszlovák,” 85.
- ⁶¹ The document speaks of “impeded bishops” in connection with the separate council session as well, but it presumably uses the expression inaccurately. If the conference featured in the state security report truly did take place, Cardinal Godfrey here was probably not speaking of impeded bishops in the canon-law sense but was thinking of the East European bishops in general, who, although they could exercise their office, could obtain exit permits to travel from the governments only with difficulty.
- ⁶² In this respect, the plan of Stefan Cardinal Wyszyński, which sheds light on the situation of the Church in Poland, is particularly interesting. The Polish cardinal recommended that the Church at the local level, through a few selected bishops begin negotiations with the state in the interests of securing the Church’s internal freedom, first and foremost the freedom of worship and religious education. Should the state ensure these conditions, the Church in exchange could guarantee that it would cooperate actively with the state in those areas that did not concern Catholic dogmas. According to Wyszyński the Holy See should enter into these negotiations only when an agreement had been concluded on a *modus vivendi* of this kind, and then it could now request that a certain number of bishops be allowed to attend the Second Vatican Council. For his part the Polish primate proposed that the attendance of one third of the bishops of each country would have to be attained in this way, while at same time guaranteeing that the attending bishops would not speak out against their governments. The Vatican’s policy and the Ecumenical Council (1962), ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 361–63.
- ⁶³ Notes on the conference of the Hungarian pastors held in Munich on February 21–22, 1962, SZIA-Zágon. 38/16.

- ⁶⁴ Report on the council invitations received by the Hungarian bishops, Budapest, August 19, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 251. In any case the report about the arrival of the 14 invitations, noting that unlike the first eight invitations these letters had not arrived registered (making their confiscation possible), requests further instructions regarding their possible delivery. We do not know what ultimately became of the letters, but they were likely not delivered to the addressees.
- ⁶⁵ According to the ÁEH, the Holy See may have been encouraged to invite the two bishops not recognized by the state to the Council by the fact that the Czechoslovak government in the meantime had in addition to two other bishops authorized the unrecognized František Tomášek to travel as well. Cf. Pro memoria on the visit in the Czechoslovak State Office for Church Affairs, Budapest, October 4, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0014-1/1962. In this instance however, Police Colonel István Berényi, the head of Subsection III/III-1/c, explicitly recommended confiscating the letters. Report, Budapest, September 14, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 258.
- ⁶⁶ Amleto Cicognani had already discussed Mindszenty's case during his visit to America in late 1961 with President John F. Kennedy, Secretary of State Dean Rusk, as well as Vice-President Lyndon B. Johnson and several State Department officials. Report on the Vatican policy and the Ecumenical Council, Budapest, June 26, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-7/1962.
- ⁶⁷ Ibid.
- ⁶⁸ Proposal to the Politburo in the Mindszenty Case, Budapest, August 4, 1962. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 274. ő. e. 92.
- ⁶⁹ Proposal to the Politburo on the Hungarian-American relations and the situation of József Mindszenty, August 10, 1962, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 57-58.
- ⁷⁰ The Holy See considered it important to establish direct ties with the Hungarian bishops despite the fact that it continued to be informed about the situation of the Hungarian Church from various sources. This is revealed from, among other things, Polikárp Radó's account of his West European trip between July 10 and August 25, 1962. Informally entrusted by the government, the professor of liturgical studies attempted via multiple channels (Piarist Superior Vince Tomek, Bishop Petrus Canisius Jean van Lierde and István Mester) to brief the Curia and the pope on the Hungarian church policy situation; from the Secretariat of State, however, he received the reply that in lieu of an official (ecclesiastical) mandate he was not regarded as a "persona qualificata," and that a bishop should come. Report on my trip between July 10 and August 25, 1962, (Polikárp Radó, Undated) MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-2-46/a/1962. Cf. also: Report on the trip of Polikárp

Radó and agent “Kövér,” Budapest, September 21, 1959. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–13 405/3–b. “Magyar Római Katolikus Püspöki Kar,” 343–58.

- ⁷¹ It is not clear where the idea for Hamvas’s visit originated. On the one hand, it is known that in February 1961 Cardinal König decided that he would build closer ties with the Church behind the “Iron Curtain” and visit the chief pastors of these countries. Cf. Del Rio and Giacomelli, *San Pietro e il Cremlino*, 78–80, and Lukács, “Vigilia beszélgetése,” 851. Hamvas’s visit—even if the archbishop of Vienna and the bishop of Csanád did not know each other personally—may have thus fitted into this plan. On the other hand, the fact that János K. Tóth’s first letter was dated shortly after König’s visit to Rome, indicates Vatican or expressly papal initiative. Cf. Proposal of István Darvasi, July 23, 1962. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 5. cs. 274. ő. e. 84. On the plan for König’s trip see also: The Vatican’s policy and the Ecumenical Council (1962), ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 363–64; and Operational proposal for the meeting in Warsaw on July 5–7, 1962. Budapest, June 28, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/1. “Canale,” 450–53.
- ⁷² The correspondence between Miklós Esty and János K. Tóth can be found in: MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0050/1962.
- ⁷³ Report on the attendance at the Council of the bishops from the socialist countries, Budapest, September 29, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 272–73.
- ⁷⁴ Copy of the pro memoria of Gyula Simó, ambassador in Rome, October 1, 1962, in Ólmosi, *Mindszenty*, 91–95.
- ⁷⁵ Report on the attendance at the Council of the bishops from the socialist countries, Budapest, September 29, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 272–73. It is interesting that within the socialist countries the “reactionary” bishops (Wyszyński and Shvoy) advocated a similar position.
- ⁷⁶ Hamvas could only communicate to Gustavo Testa the number of Hungarian council fathers as late as September 22, 1962. ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 324, fasc. 3.

2. The Hungarian People's Republic

2.1. A SHIFT IN ECCLESIASTICAL POLICY

When Pope John XXIII announced his desire to convoke a new ecumenical council, a new model of church policy was already being elaborated in Hungary. Naturally, the ultimate aim of Communist church policy remained the complete liquidation of religion and Church; however, the gradual transformation of the domestic and international climate prompted the party to make certain tactical changes. The theoretical bases for the emerging position on church policy were finally laid down in the resolutions of the Politburo of the HSWP CC adopted in the summer of 1958.¹

Although the 1956 Revolution had not directly compelled the change in church-policy model (since in the year or two following the brief days of freedom the state leadership had gradually reverted to its previous practice vis-à-vis the churches), its indirect impact is nevertheless palpable in the new concept of church policy that took shape. On the domestic front, the lessons of the revolution: the rapid collapse of the hitherto seemingly successful church policy, convinced the state leadership above all that the attempt to liquidate the Church and religion by force had failed. Those in charge of church policy were therefore forced to concede that in the future they would have to face the reality “that the religious convictions of the believing masses cannot be eliminated from one day to the next, by administrative measure or, in an insulting manner, mocking their religious sentiments”; instead, they would have to start from the premise that “the churches will exist for a long time under the conditions of socialism as well.” This would make “cooperation between the socialist state and the various churches” necessary.²

But the events of October 1956 had another domestic consequence as well, one which favored—albeit indirectly—the formulation of the new concep-

tion of church policy: the disappointment caused by the failure of the broad-based uprising and the West's passivity had led to a breaking of society's inner, spiritual and intellectual will to resist. In an atmosphere where society increasingly became resigned to the inevitable, there was less and less need for actual external force. Among the broad masses of society, it was sufficient to maintain awareness of the possibility of force to persuade people increasingly to "censor themselves" for the sake of their own peace.³ Naturally, this internal mental process did not leave the Church unscathed either: "The laws of societal development affect certain church circles as well. [...] In the churches and among church leaders the progressive-minded persons, whose camp increases from day to day, form the basis of those forces which understand the laws of societal development and have drawn the proper conclusions: they have decided for the sake of the survival and unity of the Church to support the rule of the working class, and the work of socialist construction."⁴

However, it was not only the domestic policy consequences of the 1956 Revolution that exerted an indirect impact on the elaboration of the new model of church policy. It was also the not negligible aim of the popular front policy, which placed the churches in the service of the socialist state and abandoned the open persecution of the Church, to help, by trumpeting the guarantee of religious freedom,⁵ change the negative opinion formed of Hungary in the wake of the revolution's defeat and extricate the country from its international isolation.⁶

Thus, based on the experiences of the 1950s,⁷ as well as the revolution, the new model of church policy, which started from the premise that the Church would survive in the longer term, made a distinction in principle between "religious worldview" and "clerical reaction" (i.e., "political reaction disguised as religious activity"). Concerning the fight against the religious worldview, the goal of which was the socialist re-education of all of society, the party resolution of July 22, 1958 represented a rather pragmatic stance, in as much as it determined that—due to how deeply religion was embedded in society—this fight was very much a long-term one, and so must always be subordinated to general political interests. On the other hand, the document made it clear that the fight against "clerical reaction" was to be intensified and must involve the believers and the clergy itself. Therefore, the emergent new pragmatic church policy—which can be summed up in the slogan "So long as the

Church exists, it must be exploited”—ceased treating the Church as an enemy *per se*.⁸ On the contrary: in return for loyal support the regime was prepared to guarantee it minimal freedom to operate within certain bounds. If, however, someone overstepped the boundaries offered by the state, he thereby automatically fell into the category of “clerical reaction,” identified as political activity against the state, and—because it was incompatible with the state’s interests—the unremitting fight continued, even if the activity in question was in no way political in nature. Based on the distinction between the Church (useful as a means and therefore temporarily acceptable, indeed, to be supported) and “reaction” (to be persecuted), it is perhaps not an exaggeration in the case of the new church policy to speak of the replacement of the previous persecution of the Church by persecution of religion or faith, since the regime supported only maintaining for propaganda purposes the church organization that provided religion with an external framework, while it repudiated the essence and content of religion, and persecuted those proclaiming it.⁹

The new model of church policy contained in the resolutions adopted by the Politburo in the summer of 1958 (distinguishing in principle between the struggles against “religious worldview” and “clerical reaction”) in practice represented a superficial change only. The state, social and party organs involved in the implementation of church policy,¹⁰ and the means they employed, really remained the same as before. Beyond this, the most important difference was that instead of overt outside interference the apparatus implementing ecclesiastical policy was used primarily to monitor the churches; more active measures were taken only against “clerical reaction.”

Thus, the tight controls kept in place served above all to keep the churches willing to maintain the “good relations” to the state’s liking. The government and party organs possessed two principal means that made it possible to subjugate the Church and thus utilize its hierarchy. Exploiting the financial dependence of the churches was achieved not only by rewarding the various “progressive” priests or by withholding the *congrua* of the “reactionaries.” The possibility, under the 1950 agreement, of reducing the state contribution could have endangered the Church’s complete ability to function, and thus, in the hands of the state this was an excellent means of blackmailing ecclesiastical leaders into “seeing reason” on numerous questions.¹¹ During

a session of the Politburo on March 1, 1960, in connection with the discussion of a report outlining the main experiences of the evolution of relations between the state and the Catholic Church, György Marosán voiced this idea thus: “In my opinion the way we have done things up till now was correct, and we must continue to proceed along this path. Let’s not be afraid to keep a financial hold over the church organizations so that sometimes we are the ones who call the shots.”¹²

An even more effective means than financial helplessness in the hands of the state was the abovementioned Legal Edict No. 22 of 1957, which made the filling of major ecclesiastical posts dependent on state approval. The law in fact made it possible to fill all of the key ecclesiastical positions with loyal persons acceptable to the state, and thereby carry out through ecclesiastical figures (bishops, vicars, peace priests) measures deemed necessary to isolate the Church socially and shunt aside “clerical reaction.” The Politburo’s resolution of March 1, 1960 in fact articulated this openly: “In the fight against the ecclesiastical right-wing increased and better organized use must be made of the politically loyal priesthood. [...] Let us employ direct state intervention against reactionary manifestations within the Church only in unavoidable cases.”¹³

In any case, without the help of the state security services, the party and government organs would not have been capable of achieving almost complete control of the Church. The tasks of the political police included gathering by its own special means any information that might assist the decision makers in church policy and that might also be suitable for exerting psychological pressure against church figures if the need arose. At the same time, the data collection by the state security organs about a given individual induced the previously mentioned psychological effect trending towards “self-censorship,” and the activity of the political police generally had a similar effect.¹⁴ Although this was directed chiefly at “clerical reaction,” in regard to which, in addition to acquiring information, the goal was to break down and divide groups deemed to be dangerous as well as to compromise priests with more significant influence in society, no one could feel safe. The overt steps against “reaction” (house searches, arrests, trials, etc.) also served to warn loyal persons, or at least ones not engaged in “hostile” conduct against the state, that the appropriate departments¹⁵ of the Interior Ministry were monitoring their moves via agents, or by some other means as well.¹⁶

Despite all its exaggerations, a report prepared for the international conference of church policy offices, held in Budapest between April 25 and 28, 1962, reveals a great deal about the efficacy of the new church policy model and the situation prevailing in Hungary at the start of the Second Vatican Council. In addition to the consolidation of the economic and political situation after the 1956 Revolution, the leaders of the State Office for Church Affairs could report an improvement in the situation of church policy as well. According to the document, the liquidation or isolation of a large part of the “counterrevolutionary forces,” along with an increase in the influence of loyal priests had likewise exerted a favorable influence on the work of the faithful and the “socialist reorganization of agriculture.” Despite the death of Archbishop József Grósz of Kalocsa, by 1962 the appropriate personnel changes had led to an improvement in the attitude of the episcopate. The fact that “the bishops recently have imposed ecclesiastical punishments on 49 priests for having violated the laws of the state” was seen as sign of this improvement. According to the appraisal of the ÁEH under the new circumstances “clerical reaction” continued to wage, in a new way, by exploiting “legal and illegal opportunities,” the struggle “to retain the masses of believers,” but despite this the peace priest movement, thanks to state support, had managed to reacquire the most important key ecclesiastical positions and increased its influence in the seminaries and among the young generation of priests.¹⁷

2.2. THE PLACE OF THE HOLY SEE IN HUNGARIAN ECCLESIASTICAL POLICY

Under the pragmatic model of church policy outlined in the party resolutions of the summer of 1958, which acknowledged the churches' survival in the longer term and therefore guaranteed their limited freedom, in the case of the Catholics the party continued to view the Holy See with hostility. For the leaders of the Hungarian party state saw in the Vatican not merely an ideological adversary but also a political adversary on the side of capitalism. During and after the 1956 Revolution the Holy See, interfering in Hungarian domestic politics to protect its own interests and those of the “imperialists,”¹⁸ as the base and support of “political reaction” was thus naturally judged the

same as “clerical reaction.”¹⁹ In other words, the means of “political struggle” continued to be employed against the Vatican. The new church policy orientation therefore considered it its task, in addition to accepting subordination in questions of dogma,²⁰ to loosen ties between the Hungarian Church and the Vatican as much as possible: “In the Catholic Church there are now elements who resolutely want (and also have a stake in this) gradual political distancing from the Vatican. These forces must be strengthened and supported, while the Church’s leaders must be required to distance themselves politically from the Vatican in a gradual but increasingly resolute manner.”²¹

Nor did the election of Pope John XXIII change the Hungarian party leadership’s negative image of the Vatican all at once either. Although the reports arriving from the embassy in Rome informed them that “regarding [the new pope’s] political conduct he is expected to be active foremost in the area of church policy, to display a more flexible and pliable conduct towards the people’s democracies, to be less a spokesman for extremist, reactionary political positions, and indeed he perhaps will try to go even further in removing the Vatican from the arena of political struggles,” and furthermore, “in the person of John XXIII to a certain degree a positive change can be expected with respect to the Vatican’s church policy and political line,”²² the Department of Agitation and Propaganda unswervingly emphasized the Vatican’s hostile conduct.²³ Probably based on the opinion of Vladimir Vasilevich Astafev, counselor at the embassy of the Soviet Union,²⁴ János Kádár himself suggested that the new pope’s line should be regarded rather as a change in tactics, and “probably a situation will come about that the Vatican will be much more cunning and dangerous than heretofore.”²⁵

Until the spring of 1959 the hostile attitude towards the Holy See remained theoretical. At this time, however, one of the first moves in the pope’s “change in tactics”—the invitation of the East European bishops to Rome—forced the Hungarian political leadership to take a practical stance. Although the decision on the issue, taken after lengthy deliberation, did not bring about a change compared with the previous line (because the Politburo, citing its resolution of June 10, 1958 still considered a loosening of ties between the Vatican and the Hungarian Church as desirable and therefore did not grant the Hungarian bishops permission to travel to Rome), it nevertheless left open the possibility of potentially establishing ties later. Emphasizing the tactical change in the Vatican’s policy, which the Hungarian political leadership also

had to take into account, the Politburo decided that the journey of a few members of the Hungarian episcopate to Rome would “not be timely” due to “the abnormal relations existing between the Vatican and the Hungarian People's Republic.”²⁶

The non-categorical refusal concealed a gradual differentiation of views and groups within the party relating to church policy. The Politburo resolutions drafted in the summer of 1958 may be regarded as the first watershed between the different concepts of church policy. A minority in the party, including certain members of the Politburo, did not consider the new church-policy tactics laid out in these documents as correct, but instead saw a continuation of the previous, tougher practice as necessary. Their position sprang above all from the fear that in the long run the new policy tactics might also endanger the possibility of achieving the ultimate aim, the liquidation of religion and Church, since they favored the Church more than they served the interests of the atheistic state.²⁷ Although proponents of the former church policy became a minority after 1958, their influence had not ceased completely. The hard-liners subsequently achieved success in asserting their views first of all in that area where both they and the framers of the new church-policy model agreed the use of political-administrative warfare was acceptable: the struggle against “clerical reaction.” Thus, for example, there is no doubt that the views of this faction were more strongly asserted in the Politburo's resolution of March 1, 1960, though this still did not represent a retreat in comparison with the new model of church policy adopted in 1958. The resolution, dealing exclusively with the Catholic Church, proceeded on the basis of the previous distinction in principle when it sought to outline the bases of a practical policy to be used against “clerical reaction,” naturally indicating in this the role of the loyal ecclesiastics as well.

During the decision-making process regarding the invitation of the Hungarian bishops to an *ad limina* visit, a further differentiation also began within the groups supporting the new church-policy orientation adopted in 1958, since the leadership of Hungarian church policy was forced to rethink the implementation of the 1958 Politburo resolutions from the viewpoint of relations with the Holy See. The decision to deny the bishops permission to travel was reached based on the proposal of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda, which stated “our church policy

must continue to be aimed at loosening the political ties between the Vatican and the Hungarian Catholic hierarchy, and gradually turning them into antagonisms.”²⁸

Clinging rigidly to the letter of the 1958 resolution, the Department of Agitation and Propaganda believed it could make the Hungarian Church—as long as it existed—suitably support the government’s goals within the new model of church policy by separating the local Church from the Holy See. By contrast, the leaders of the State Office for Church Affairs, which regularly consulted with the bishops and had a more accurate picture of the situation of the Hungarian Church, clearly understood that there was no genuine chance of such a break in Hungary. Although in its proposal regarding the pope’s invitation the ÁEH itself—similar to the stance taken by the Department of Agitation and Propaganda—recalled the Holy See’s hostile attitude towards the Hungarian People’s Republic and recognized the negative domestic effects of letting the bishops go, nevertheless, in light of John XXIII’s new policy, and citing both foreign and domestic advantages,²⁹ it argued in favor of allowing Hamvas and Grósz to attend, highlighting that a “certain support of the new pope’s line against the aggressive circles, naturally keeping our internal church policy line in sight,”³⁰ was in the Hungarian government’s interest.

Thus, in contrast to the position expounded in the 1958 resolution on church policy and advocated by the Department of Agitation and Propaganda, which sought to turn the Hungarian Church into an obedient instrument of the state through a gradual break with the Holy See, within the ÁEH³¹ a new conception began to take shape, one which, also taking into account the foreign-policy aspects, could see that supporting the Vatican’s moderate line would better benefit Hungarian church policy in the long run. At the same time, this did not rule out the possibility of maintaining state control over the Hungarian Church in the future through bishops acceptable to the government. This emerging new concept of church policy, which in its essentials did not deviate from the basic principles set out in 1958 but merely placed greater emphasis than before on foreign policy in addition to the domestic policy, was still a minority position within the Hungarian party leadership in the spring of 1959: under the prevailing circumstances the Holy See’s “hostile attitude” was still judged to be dominant and thus reached a negative verdict. However, the fact that the Politburo, by attaching to its

rejection the comment “not timely at present,” in principle left open the possibility of negotiating with the Vatican and establishing controlled relations, indicates the influence of the adherents of the new conception. Naturally, to subsequently overrule the position articulated by the ÁEH and put these ideas into effect, it was also necessary for the Soviet Union to give the green light.³² Under no circumstances could the Hungarian party-state leadership have made such a momentous decision without first having consulted in advance with the “fraternal parties” and the Soviets having authorized it.

2.3. THE HUNGARIAN PEOPLE'S REPUBLIC AND THE ISSUE OF COUNCIL ATTENDANCE

The negative image of the Vatican formed by the Socialist Bloc not only played a role in the Hungarian rejection of the Holy See's February 1959 invitation; for a long time it also determined how the socialist countries reacted to the Council. This hostile attitude also explains something else. The diplomats of Western states did not know how to assess the significance of the undertaking, which at first appeared too uncertain,³³ until the late spring of 1959, when the hitherto formless initiative assumed a more definite form after the pope entrusted the Secretariat of State with the concrete preparations for the Council. The Soviet party leadership by contrast was ready to react immediately.

Already a few days after the announcement of the Council, on January 31, 1959, the chairman of the State Committee for Cultural Relations with Foreign Countries attached to the USSR Council of Ministers, Georgii Aleksandrovich Zhukov, called the CPSU Central Committee's attention to the fact that the Council's planned ecumenical dimension indicated the threat of the establishment of a Vatican-led anti-Communist Christian united front. The first Soviet proposal regarding the Council, drafted a few weeks later on February 9, 1959, likewise assessed reference to the unity of Christians as an attack against Communism. For this reason, it designated the obstruction of the Holy See's ecumenical plans as the chief task relating to the Council. The authors of the document, Aleksei Aleksandrovich Puzin, chairman of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults (CARC) attached

to the USSR Council of Ministers, and Georgii Grigorevich Karpov, chairman of the Council for the Affairs of the Russian Orthodox Church (CAROC) attached to the USSR Council of Ministers, sought to achieve this goal by organizing interdenominational world peace summits, securing the admission of the non-Catholic Christian churches and denominations of the Socialist Bloc into the World Council of Churches (WCC), and convening a pan-Orthodox (counter-)council within two years.³⁴

Like the Soviet Union, those directing Hungarian church policy would also soon deal with the significance of the Council. However, while the Soviets—in keeping with the religious-denominational conditions of the Soviet Union—concentrated primarily on the planned ecumenical objectives, the first Hungarian appraisal dealt with the issue with respect to the invitation of the Hungarian bishops to Rome, which had come almost simultaneously with the announcement of the Council. Based on our present state of knowledge, according to the first document drafted at the ÁEH in reaction to the Council,³⁵ the invitation of most of the episcopate—despite the fact that the invitation letter made no reference to it—was part of the preparations for the announced upcoming Council, since for the sake of the Council's intended universality the Holy See needed to secure the participation of the bishops from the East European countries as well. The assessment stated that “to this end the Vatican obviously will be willing to make certain concessions (because it is forced to do so) to the popular democratic countries. The aspiration for a potential *modus vivendi* on the part of the Vatican may also arise.” Although the ÁEH, in order to obtain the greatest number of concessions possible, publicly intended to treat the matters of the *ad limina* visit and the attendance at the Council separately, by delaying the selected bishops' possible trip to Rome it simultaneously sought to ensure that the Vatican lost time “with respect to preparation for the Ecumenical Council.”

As was alluded to above, unlike the ÁEH's more pragmatic and flexible stance, the party leadership, based on the proposal prepared by the Department of Agitation and Propaganda which complied with the guidelines laid out in the 1958 Politburo resolution, in the end did not permit the bishops to travel to Rome, citing the Vatican's “hostile attitude.” However, this rejection still did not represent a categorical denial of the possibility of their attending the Council. Despite this, the ÁEH subsequently spoke of the possibility in principle of the bishops' traveling to the Vatican likewise only out of tactical

considerations, while it considered a loosening of the ties between the Vatican and the Hungarian clergy as the primary task of church policy.³⁶ In the wake of the Soviet Union's dismissive attitude, as well as out of considerations of domestic church policy, the rejection of council attendance in the early 1960s had become so firm that it played a role in arguments related to foreign policy moves as well. In a proposal drafted for the Politburo on March 29, 1960, for example, Deputy Foreign Minister János Péter and Imre Hollai, head of the HSWP CC Department of Foreign Affairs, did not recommend opening negotiations between the Holy See and Hungary on Mindszenty's case. One of the reasons they cited was that in this case the Vatican would demand in return, among other things, the attendance of the Hungarian Catholic bishops at the Council. Attendance at the Council, in turn, would adversely affect not only Hungary but also those socialist states that had disputes with the Vatican.³⁷

Despite the dismissive attitude, the Council meant additional tasks for those managing Hungarian (church) policy. These tasks, however—besides continuously following events—, concerned the Protestant churches, and stemmed from the implementation of the Soviet position, which was formed first and foremost based on the aforementioned proposal of Puzin and Karpov. After the international conference of the Communist religious affairs offices, held in Karlovy Vary between May 17 and 20, 1961, the tasks of the Socialist Bloc related to the Council were determined by common guidelines adopted in the spirit of the Soviet assessment. Under the Soviet proposal, drafted on February 19, 1959, not only were decisions reached at this conference regarding the political preparations for the First All-Christian Peace Assembly in Prague and the tasks of the Prague Christian Peace Conference to be established following the ceremony (i.e., the founding of an interdenominational peace summit and peace organization)³⁸ but, contrary to the previous German and Czechoslovak stances, the admission into the WCC of the non-Catholic churches and denominations of the Socialist Bloc was also accepted in accordance with Soviet designs.³⁹ Following the conference of church-policy leaders, under the terms of the resolution in the spring of 1961 these churches and denominations without membership joined the WCC. At the latter body's next conference (New Delhi, November 18–December 6, 1961), they now attempted to enforce the guidelines put forward by the Hungarian side and

jointly adopted in Karlovy Vary. It was the common task of the church delegations from the socialist countries—in order to neutralize the Catholic Church's suspected council ambition to create an anti-Communist united front—to build relations with the delegates of the (former) colonial countries, prevent any attack directed at the socialist states or the Prague Christian Peace Conference; furthermore, to criticize those western church figures—and not the WCC—who urged rapprochement with the Vatican, and to make sure that the socialist countries not lose positions in the elections for new WCC officials.⁴⁰

From the above it is clearly apparent that within a short time Hungarian church policy had fully accepted the Soviet interpretation of the Council and construed the ecclesiastical event in political terms, as a new means of attack against atheistic Communism. This negative appraisal of both the Council and the Vatican's conduct was also reinforced by the information arriving in the meantime.

For example, in his report of January 14, 1961, detailing the preparations for the Council, the Hungarian minister to Rome, Gyula Simó, not only listed the scheduled topics but also considered it certain, based on news leaked about the content of the episcopal recommendations that had come in, that “the Council will once again vigorously condemn Communism, atheism and materialism. It will buttress its position so specifically that it will place a valuable weapon in the hands of anti-Communist governments. It is a question of no less than excommunication.” At the same time, although in his report the minister considered the achievement of actual Christian unity a remote possibility, he asserted as a *fait accompli* that “agreement on moral and social issues will form a *cortina religiosa* against the Iron Curtain, the sole policy of which will be a tooth-and-nail fight against everything Communist or anything resembling it.”⁴¹ It is no wonder, therefore, if all this information even further reinforced the leaders of Hungarian church policy in their negative opinion of the Council and their hostile behavior towards the Vatican.⁴²

The position rejecting participation of the Socialist Bloc, including Hungary, began to change in the spring of 1962. At the same time, this reappraisal of the perception of the Council did not occur without antecedents. Soviet church-policy leaders had begun weighing the possibility of Russian Orthodox Council observers attending quite early on. After consulting with

the patriarch and other leaders of the Russian Orthodox Church, on March 13, 1959 Metropolitan Nikolai informed Karpov, the chairman of CAROC, of their position: although the participation of the Russian Orthodox Church in the Council was inconceivable from an ecclesiastical standpoint (i.e., to discuss the unity of Christians), from a political standpoint (i.e., as long as the Council placed the problem of peace on the agenda as well) the sending of observers could not be ruled out, since the Russian Orthodox Church also was working for this in conformity with Soviet political interests. However, ultimately nothing came of Metropolitan Nikolai's initiative, because Karpov was soon replaced at the head of CAROC by Vladimir Alekseevich Kuroedov. For his part, the new leader favored the anti-Vatican foreign-policy activity on the part of the Patriarchate of Moscow. However, Metropolitan Nikolai did not agree with this new thinking. Therefore, in June 1961 he was forced to resign, his place taken by Archimandrite Nikodim, who aligned the patriarchate's foreign policy with the thinking of the political leadership. A clearly visible sign of the change in direction was an article appearing in the paper of the Moscow Patriarchate in May 1961 under the title "Non possumus," which outlined the Russian Church's reasons for refusing to attend the Council and sharply criticized the Vatican's "aggressive" policy towards the Prague Christian Peace Conference.⁴³

The course of events however soon prompted Moscow to shift direction once again. The new attitude was signaled as early as February 28, 1962 in a letter sent by Aleksii Buevskii, secretary of the Moscow Patriarchate's department responsible for church foreign relations, to the head of the ecumenical study center *Istina* in Paris, the French Dominican Christophe-Jean Dumont, which no longer contained hostile statements against the Council. The considerations justifying the authorization of participation by Orthodox observers were laid down by Archimandrite Nikodim in a proposal dated March 21, 1962. He pointed out that by abstaining the Patriarchate of Moscow would become isolated and thereby make it possible for Constantinople to become the leading force of Orthodoxy once and for all, while Moscow would lose its influence over the eastern churches. Moreover, the absence would call into question the sincerity of the Russian Orthodox Church's admission to the WCC, since everyone would interpret the lack of observers as a rejection of Christian rapprochement. Lastly, Nikodim emphasized that it was precisely through the attendance of Russian

observers that positive results counter to the outlined negative effects could be achieved. The available sources do not reveal unequivocally, in addition to the ecclesiastical leadership's new situational assessment, how large a role Pope John XXIII's feelers initiated through Internuncio Lardone, in March (discussed above) played. There is no doubt, however, that from the early spring of 1962 on the leadership of the Soviet church policy gradually changed their stance on the Council. Finally, an unmistakable sign of the new attitude was the May 1962 report of N. A. Filippov, the new chief inspector of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults, acknowledging the political failure of opposing the attendance of Russian observers. Contrary to the earlier strategy, Filippov recommended examining the possibility of sending observers in order to avoid the danger of the Moscow Patriarchate's isolation. It was likewise in the Soviet Union's interest for it to be able to follow the internal changes of the Catholic Church closely.⁴⁴

The rethinking of the Hungarian refusal to participate was organically linked to the change in Soviet strategy. While the Soviet ambassador to Rome in March 1962 explicitly recommended letting the reliable Hungarian bishops attend,⁴⁵ those in charge of Hungarian church policy in this period were by no means yet convinced that the benefits of Hungarian attendance would outweigh the potential harm. The Hungarian proposal drafted for the next conference of socialist church-policy offices—besides continuing to push for action against the Vatican in international church organizations—emphasized with regard to the Council above all the negative domestic policy effects of the Hungarian bishops' potential attendance. Attendance "would end the slackening which has occurred recently between the Hungarian Church and the Vatican, and would strengthen the influence of the Vatican's reactionary forces on the Hungarian Catholic Church." The document at the same time also pointed out that the question of attendance had to be decided in accordance with international political interests. Should these interests demand that a few Hungarian bishops attend the Council, the negative domestic effects could be counterbalanced "through intensive political work" relying on the "progressive forces" predominant within the episcopate and in leading ecclesiastical positions.⁴⁶

The goal of the socialist church-policy conference, held in Budapest between April 25 and 28, 1962, for which the above Hungarian proposal had been drafted, was to determine the political guidelines concerning the

churches' international forums (the World Council of Churches, the Prague Christian Peace Conference and the Second Vatican Council) and to coordinate the tasks relating to this. Even though the conference did not bring about a radical turning-point in the assessment of the Second Vatican Council, and thus the coordination of the anti-Vatican peace fight, within the framework of the World Council of Churches and the Prague Christian Peace Conference, continued to remain an important task in the eyes of the attending church policy leaders, new guiding principles regarding the council attendance were nonetheless adopted in accordance with the new Soviet position taking shape since March.⁴⁷

Like the previous ones, the two reports dealing with the Holy See's policy and the Second Vatican Council reached the conclusion that the "main feature of the Vatican's present policy and ideological conduct continues to be anti-Communism."⁴⁸ However, the rapporteurs (Tadeusz Żabiński, head of the Polish Office for Church Affairs, and Aleksei Aleksandrovich Puzin, chairman of CARC) regarded the Council as a unique instrument of the Holy See's policy,⁴⁹ testimony to the fact that the Vatican, thanks to the expansion of "progressive forces" wished to pursue an ever more flexible policy. At the same time, the rapporteurs called attention to the fact that the "progressives" fight against with the "conservatives" had by no means come to an end, therefore the Council, which confronts the Church with the changing modern world, could have particular significance for the Holy See's future policy. According to the assessments, following the various meetings with representatives of the non-Catholic churches it had become clear that the Council would not be capable of achieving a "general ideological front of all Christians",⁵⁰ yet the Vatican still would not abandon its plan of establishing an anti-Communist unified front. It would have to postpone this for a later time, and the Council would discuss first and foremost internal church questions. And the main purpose of these would be the restoration of the Church's lost prestige among the faithful and in society. In light of the above, both rapporteurs pointed out that the Vatican's "militant clericalism" and propaganda campaign⁵¹ were really intended to conceal the Church's internal weakness, and the chief purpose of the Council also was to demonstrate the strength and universality of Catholicism. With the Council, therefore, the Vatican did not merely wish to find a solution to the problems of the Church, which had fallen into crisis in the modern era, but

wanted also to increase its influence, first and foremost in Africa, Asia, and Latin America, where it was trying thus to impede the spread of socialism.⁵²

Thus, according to the new situational assessment—though coordination of the anti-Vatican “peace struggle” in the two ecclesiastical world organizations still remained an important task—socialist church policy now had an interest in seeing the “progressives” within the ecclesiastical leadership come out on top during the Council, meant to answer the challenges of the age, because from this a more flexible policy willing to compromise with the Communist states could be hoped for. To support this faction, and in the hope of establishing direct ties and gaining information, the participation of the Catholic bishops of the Socialist Bloc now seemed acceptable.⁵³ It must be emphasized at the same time that the conference in any case did not bring about a unified stance on attendance but merely articulated the theoretical possibility of it.⁵⁴

2.4. A DECISION IS REACHED IN HUNGARY

Based on the new stance, which created the theoretical possibility of attending the Council, the leaders of church policy of the various states one by one made the practical decision conforming to the particular situations of their countries. In the case of the almost completely Catholic Poland (where the Church, because it was so deeply imbedded in society, represented a peculiar force among the countries of the Socialist Bloc) and the overwhelmingly Protestant GDR (where by contrast the Catholic Church, precisely on account of its relatively small social clout, did not pose a serious threat), it had been announced already at the conference of the offices of church affairs in Budapest that the bishops would be permitted to attend the Council. For the Soviet Union, with its Orthodox majority, the key issue was not whether to permit Catholic bishops to attend the Council but rather the question of sending Orthodox observers. The final decision on this, however, was reached only shortly before the opening of the Council, after Cardinal Eugène Tisserant, acting on the pope’s instructions concluded an agreement with Archimandrite Nikodim in early September 1962. Under its terms the Council would not condemn Communism, and in return the patriarch of Moscow would ensure the Council’s ecumenical character by sending Orthodox observers.⁵⁵

As in the Soviet Union, a final decision was reached late in Hungary and Czechoslovakia. Although neither country's leaders ruled out the theoretical possibility of participating, a final decision on attendance was postponed primarily in order to weigh both benefits in foreign policy and possible dangers in domestic policy. The Hungarian leadership in fact seriously anticipated that attendance might worsen the "good relations" that had developed between Church and state in Hungary. However, starting from the notion that "the balance of power is such that not even the bishop reinforced by reaction could do anything against us. Not only because the mass influence of the people's democracy is such that he has no footing among the workers, but because within the priesthood too we have many allies,"⁵⁶ they regarded first of all the evolution of the international situation, as well as of the council preparations and prospective balance of power as decisive.

For this, however, first and foremost continuously fresh information was needed. It is no coincidence, therefore, that on May 24, 1962 the State Office for Church Affairs turned to the Hungarian ministers to Rome and Paris with the request that they send materials about the Council as well as about the balance of power between the factions within the Catholic Church.⁵⁷ The data requested via the diplomatic route, however (almost certainly because of summer vacations and, in the case of Rome, the change in minister),⁵⁸ arrived quite late, on the eve of the start of the Council or during the first session.⁵⁹ In acquiring the appropriate information, therefore, apart from Hungarian intelligence⁶⁰ it was above all the state security organs of "friendly countries" that could be relied upon. Among the materials sent via this route, a prominent role was played by the compilation prepared by the Polish state security organs on June 18, 1962. This influenced the stance on the Council of those in charge of Hungarian church policy—but of the state security in particular—to a great extent.⁶¹

While newer and newer reports about the Council and the Holy See's policy slowly streamed in through the above channels, the first concrete proposal by ÁEH concerning Hungarian attendance appeared as early as June 5.⁶² Arguing in favor of the attendance of Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád, the document, which the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda submitted to the Politburo on June 7,⁶³ represented a serious step forward towards the assembly of the council delegation, since it

indicated that those guiding Hungarian church policy, beyond granting permission in principle, were now also reckoning with the possibility of attendance in practice.

Apparently, it was ultimately the Holy See that gave the initial impetus for the Hungarian stance to move in this direction. Having inquired, through Lardone, in vain about the possibility of attendance on April 30, the Vatican's decision to send the invitations to the Council now stirred the Hungarian bishops themselves begin to press for permission to travel outside the country. Thus, in addition to the series of petitions sent one after the other to the ÁEH chairman, it was particularly the meeting between Bishop Hamvas and Gyula Kállai, the deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers, that proved decisive. During this encounter the bishop raised the following arguments in favor of permitting him to travel: the government could rely on him, because he considered himself a sufficiently experienced diplomat to know what answer to give if asked about the situation of the Hungarian Church; at the same time he also pointed out that he would be attacked less for his loyal conduct if several bishops could attend the Council. In addition, the leaders of the peace priest movement, Miklós Beresztóczy and Richárd Horváth, also approved of Hamvas's trip because they believed that a Hungarian council delegation would increase the country's international prestige and vindicate the government's church policy.⁶⁴ Following the submission of the Department of Agitation and Propaganda summarizing the above, on June 12 the Politburo finally granted its approval in principle to Hamvas's attendance. However, the decision did not count as final: for this they felt it necessary first to obtain through the Politburo's Foreign Affairs Committee the consent of the "fraternal parties" as well.⁶⁵

In any case, by June 23, 1962, only the responses of the Polish and Soviet parties, approving of Hamvas's travel, had arrived. On the basis of the favorable opinions, the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda once again submitted to the Politburo the proposal on the journey of the bishop of Csanád.⁶⁶ However, at its session of August 7 the Politburo removed the proposal from the agenda without discussion, entrusting Gyula Kállai and CC secretary István Szirmai with examining the question and working out a new proposal.⁶⁷ Although the minutes of the Politburo meeting do not reveal the justification for postponing the final decision, it was likely the change in the stance of the ÁEH that made it necessary to revisit the issue.

Unfortunately the available documents do not reveal unequivocally the reason that led to the revision of the ÁEH's earlier proposal. Based on the content of the draft prepared by Jakab Herling on July 27, 1962 as well as the circumstances of its origin, three factors can nevertheless be deduced that jointly may have prompted the leaders of church policy in the end to push for other bishops besides Endre Hamvas to attend the Council.⁶⁸

Based on the reports of the socialist church-affairs conference in Budapest and the information continuously coming in, they reached the conclusion first of all that not only would the Vatican be forced to postpone the realization of Christian unity, but in order to preserve its weakened positions during the Church's planned inner renewal it would also seek to provide answers first of all to the problems of the churches in Asia, Africa and Latin America. And because they appraised this as a change in the balance of power favoring the socialist camp, they saw it as necessary, even despite the Vatican's hitherto "hostile policy," to exploit every opportunity "for the sake of broadening the peace struggle and spreading progressive ideals." While this consideration in and of itself did not represent a true novelty compared with previous considerations (and thus did not necessarily mean that multiple bishops should attend the Council from Hungary, too), an expressly new element of the late July draft plan is the argument that clearly testifies that the State Office for Church Affairs had weighed and found convincing the reasoning of Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád, who during the conversation with the deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers attempted to gain approval for several bishops to attend. Therefore, Jakab Herling's proposal, while emphasizing that "the attendance of certain bishops at the Council does not mean a normalization of relations between the State of the Hungarian People's Republic and the Vatican," urged that not only Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád but also Bishops Kálmán Papp of Győr, Vince Kovács of Vác and perhaps Sándor Kovács of Szombathely be approved to travel to the Council.

The new draft simultaneously dealt in greater detail than the earlier drafts with those considerations that, according to the ÁEH, spoke in favor of or against attendance. The document represented a novelty also in that, among the arguments in favor of attendance, it no longer took into consideration merely the international (church) policy aspects, but in addition to the effects on domestic policy, hitherto judged exclusively negatively, it saw

positives in the bishops' visit that could be used for domestic church policy as well. Thus, among the arguments in favor of attendance it pointed out first of all that the presence of a group of Hungarian bishops would place "international ecclesiastical reaction" in an uncomfortable position, because henceforth they could allude neither to the fact that the Hungarian government wanted to separate the Church from the Vatican, nor that the socialist state was not allowing the bishops to leave the country out of weakness and fear. Second, it called attention furthermore to the fact that the attendance of the "loyal" Hungarian bishops would demonstrate the "good relations" between the state and the Church, and several bishops together would be better able to resist potential pressure exerted by the Vatican. A third important factor was that the attending bishops could "correctly" (that is, in conformity with the state's interests) inform international opinion about the Hungarian Church's situation and thereby increase the prestige of the Hungarian People's Republic. Fourth, Hungarian participation moreover would make it possible also to obtain direct and multilateral information about the proceedings of the Council. Lastly, an argument not included previously was that attendance could exert a favorable impact on ecclesiastical opinion also in the area of domestic policy, since it could be explained that it was the "good relationship [between Church and state] that made it possible and the main cultivators of this are first and foremost the loyal priests." Moreover, portraying the Hungarian delegation's trip in this light would make it possible all at once to isolate ecclesiastical reaction and demonstrate that in Hungary only loyal priests had a future.⁶⁹

Of course the document did not keep silent about the reasons against leaving for the Council either. Like the previous arguments, it pointed out that it was largely in the sphere of domestic policy that difficulties could be anticipated. First, it was probable that the Vatican would attempt to influence the bishops and persuade them to show firmer resistance to the Communist regime. Second, as a consequence of this, as well as of the bishops' efforts to implement the council resolutions, cooperation between the state and the Church might temporarily worsen. Lastly, the draft drew attention to the likelihood that after the Council the Vatican would almost certainly continue to attempt to influence the activities of the Bench of Bishops directly.

Apart from the shift in the balance of power in favor of the socialist camp and the acceptance of Hamvas's argument, taking into account the role played

in the subsequent decision-making process by the advance consultation with the leaders of Czechoslovak church policy, it may be assumed that the bilateral exchange of experiences also played a role in revising the original proposal. Especially indicative of this is that the new proposal, which no longer contemplated Hamvas attending alone, also urged that efforts be made to have, in addition to the bishops, the apostolic administrators or vicars capitular heading the dioceses invited as well. On July 13, 1962 Czechoslovakia's ambassador to Budapest, František Pišek, informed Deputy Foreign Minister Frigyes Puja and Imre Hollai that the Czechoslovak government was willing to allow delegates to go to the Council if they promised not to condemn Communism, if the government could decide who was allowed to go and if they would not attack the socialist regime at the Council.⁷⁰ The reason for the Czechoslovak church-policy leaders' insistence on the right to assemble the delegation and that the Holy See address the invitations not to persons but to the dioceses was that only three of the country's thirteen dioceses were headed by consecrated bishops. Therefore they tried to obtain in this way permission for the vicars capitular administering the dioceses, who were acceptable to the government as well, to attend the Council.⁷¹ Thus, it must have been in knowledge of the Czechoslovak position that the new draft by the State Office for Church Affairs incorporated the specific suggestion that they attempt to obtain this concession from the Holy See through Hamvas.⁷²

On August 1 a memorandum summarizing the ÁEH's lengthy draft was prepared for Gyula Kállai. In it, the deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers was informed about those arguments in favor of Endre Hamvas not traveling to the Council alone. In addition to repeating the arguments previously presented, the document also listed those members of the episcopate whose attendance at the Council could be considered. It also urged the party leadership to make a decision as soon as possible in the interests of making suitable preparations. In connection with preparation time in any case they were thinking only of the Office for Church Affairs and the state security organs because, preparing for every possibility, they wished to reserve the opportunity to change the position until the last moment. For this reason they anticipated that the decision "would be disclosed to the persons concerned, and made public, only after September 15."⁷³

Although the August 1 memorandum prepared for Kállai asked that a decision be made quickly, the Politburo did not place the ÁEH's new proposal on the agenda at its August 7 meeting, but—as was alluded to above—considered a further examination of the question necessary. As in the case of the first proposal (allowing Bishop Hamvas to travel alone), the opinion of the “friendly countries,” and particularly of Czechoslovakia, proved decisive in accepting the new version as well. Karel Hruža, head of the Department of Church Affairs in the Czechoslovak Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs, briefed the Hungarian church policy leadership about the Czechoslovak position in greater detail than previously during his trip to Budapest on August 15, 1962. In the course of his visit he reported that a decision about attending the Council had yet to be reached in Czechoslovakia, because for the time being they were awaiting the Vatican's response to the government's conditions,⁷⁴ though the party's central leadership supported the Hungarian position envisioning the attendance of several bishops. Parallel to the consultation with Hruža, the Hungarian leadership was briefed about the position of the other socialist countries as well. That the Soviet Union, though it had not yet decided whether to allow the two Catholic bishops who received invitations to go, commented favorably about the Hungarian delegation attending the Council counted as decisive, as did the decision of the Polish and East German church policy leaders, who had indicated even earlier that they would permit larger delegations from their countries to attend.⁷⁵

In addition to the positive feedback of the “fraternal parties,” it was the subsequent discussion between Endre Hamvas and Gyula Kállai that proved critical when drafting the new proposal coming before the Politburo. While the deputy chairman of the Council of Ministers informed Hamvas that the government trusted him and considered his attendance at the Council possible, the bishop of Csanád once again came forward with his earlier request that he not take part in the Council alone. When asked by Kállai, Hamvas indicated Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely “as someone who, apart from himself, should absolutely attend the Council.” The latest proposal, this time prepared by the Department of Agitation and Propaganda, thus envisioned, in addition to Hamvas, the attendance of Kovács, along with (if the invitation of apostolic administrators and vicars capitular could also be secured through Hamvas's letter) Pál Brezanóczy and two attendants each.⁷⁶ The proposal, supplemented by the notification of the 15 invitations that had

arrived for the Czechoslovak bishops, was finally adopted by the Politburo at its session of September 4, 1962, thereby making it possible for a Hungarian delegation of limited numbers to take part in the Second Vatican Council.⁷⁷ Chairman József Prantner summarized the process of deliberation and the reasons for the decision at the national conference of the ÁEH's employees held on September 19, 1962 as follows:

Whether or not the bishops of the socialist countries will attend the Council has meant the biggest deliberation concerning the Vatican Council in the socialist countries. Both possibilities had to be taken into account. [...] It is clear that it would be much easier for us if we didn't go. Church policy now is generally good, on the big issues we can agree, we don't really have to argue much about things. It would be good if this remained so. And if we didn't go, our work would continue to be easier. [...] But on the other hand, when weighing matters we realized also that the bishops' attendance at the Council has to be viewed not only from the point of view of our present situation and the greater ease of our work, but also with regard to the impact this will have on the international prestige of the socialist countries, and our homeland, what impact it will have on the struggle of our fraternal parties living in the West and the progressive movements, and what effect it might have on those forces within the Church – and those in the Vatican – who are striving for some sort of agreement. And thus we concluded that, though the possibility of the bishops attending the Council makes our work more difficult, this is what must be done.⁷⁸

Notes

- ¹ The two resolutions (that concerning the state-Church relations dated Budapest, June 10, 1958, and that on combating the religious worldview dated Budapest, July 22, 1958) are published in Balogh and Gergely, Állam, document nos. 214 and 215. Decrees similar to the party resolutions in Hungary were issued in the early 1960s in the Soviet Union as well. Cf. Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 65.
- ² Balogh and Gergely, Állam, 1003.
- ³ This inner mental process is analyzed, using his own example, by Gauck, “De l’aveuglement,” 161–72. The circular of the Bench of Bishops for January 1, 1960, the text of which Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád drafted, is a good example of the emergence of self-censorship. The circular, assessing positively the results achieved in the establishment of agricultural cooperatives, accorded with the party’s demands almost without changes: “[...] essentially we made only structural changes, reduced the length and in a few places made corrections. This text was approved by the Bench of Bishops as a whole, even by persons like Lajos Shvoy.” Speech of Károly Olt at the Politburo’s session of March 1, 1960. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 5. cs. 172. ő. e. 26.
- ⁴ Balogh and Gergely, Állam, 1003–1004.
- ⁵ The July 22, 1958 resolution of the HSWP CC Politburo, for example, states the following: “The ideological struggle against the religious worldview must not offend the religious sentiments of the faithful, nor should it infringe the freedom of religious practice. The state is guided in its dealings with the churches by the objective of loyalty, and it offers financial support for the churches to fulfill their functions.” Cf. “Religious Policy,” 182.
- ⁶ In December 1958 János Kádár put this as follows: “The fact that the problem of the churches is not as bad today as it was earlier, that has an international aspect as well. That relations between the state and the Church here at home are rather good is unpleasant for the Vatican.” Minutes on the Politburo’s session of December 16, 1958. MNL-OL M KS–288. f. 5. cs. 108. ő. e. 34.

- ⁷ One document prepared by the State Office for Church Affairs on March 25, 1958 summarizes the errors made in church policy precisely based on these experiences: the lack of a comprehensive and systematic church policy, the imbalances discernable in the combination of political and administrative methods, as a consequence of which the religious masses “understood the pressure exerted on ecclesiastical reaction as a limitation of freedom of religion and conscience,” as well as the fact that “church policy had relied on a relatively narrow stratum within the churches.” Draft proposal on the church policy. March 25, 1958. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1958/4. ő. e. 26.
- ⁸ Balogh, “Egyház és egyházpolitika,” 72.
- ⁹ Cf. Fejérdy, “Presenza ungherese,” 104–106.
- ¹⁰ For the party, state and social organs involved in implementing church policy see Köbel, “*Oszd meg és uralkodj!*,” 32–39.
- ¹¹ Contrary to the original plan, financial support of the churches was not reduced starting in 1961. The taking of immediate “necessary economizing and simplifying measures” entailed by the reduction would cause disturbances that “would worsen the situation of the church leaders and priests advocating political loyalty.” Köbel, “*Oszd meg és uralkodj!*,” 136.
- ¹² Minutes on the Politburo’s session of March 1, 1960. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 5. cs. 172. ő. e. 23.
- ¹³ Resolutions of the Politburo on the state-Church relations from March 1, 1960, in Ólmosi, *Mindszenty*, 81.
- ¹⁴ The duties of the state security organs are summarized in: Resolutions of the Politburo on some questions of combating internal reaction. June 20, 1960. MNL-OL M KS–288. f. 5. cs. 188. ő. e. 49–54.
- ¹⁵ On the evolution of the organizational structure of the state security organs see: Cseh, “Magyarországi állambiztonsági szervek,” 79–85, and Urbán, “Magyar állambiztonsági,” 3–74.
- ¹⁶ Chapter IV of the summary report prepared by the Interior Ministry’s Subsection II/5–c on November 29, 1961 enumerates the operative means employed in “closed cases and those in progress.” These included: surveillance by agents; installing listening devices in rooms (Regulation III/e); tapping telephones (Regulation III/a); monitoring correspondence (“K” monitoring); external surveillance; clandestine photography; clandestine house searches; and keeping records. Cf. Summary report on the year 1960. Budapest, November 29, 1961. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/1. “Canale,” 328–29. The primary duties of the agent network (observation of subjects, confusion and dispersal of communities, morally compromising subjects) are summarized in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 64–67. For more on the means and methods of state security work, see: Tabajdi and Ungváry, *Elhallgatott múlt*, 144–77.

- ¹⁷ Directives for the Hungarian standpoint to be presented at the conference of the socialist church affairs offices (Budapest, April 25–28, 1962). Budapest, April 12, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 0028/7-1962. 3.
- ¹⁸ According to the available documents, the leaders of Hungarian (church) policy resented above all that the Holy See had backed the “counter-revolution,” continued to regard Mindszenty as head of the Church, and punished the “progressive priests” via decree. Report on the prevention of the Vatican’s hostile conduct. Budapest, March 13, 1958. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-13 405/3-a; “Magyar Római Katolikus Püspöki Kar,” 58–61.
- ¹⁹ The party resolution of July 22, 1958 stated: “Anti-clerical propaganda will make an impact and bring results only if it systematically exposes the international role of church reactionaries and the activities they pursue against the Hungarian People’s Republic. National public opinion must be informed of the counter-revolutionary political actions of the Vatican, and of the pope himself, by which tried to hinder the process of consolidation within the country after the defeat of the counter-revolution. We must reveal the identity of interests of the Vatican and the imperialist monopolies.” “Religious Policy,” 185. The proposal drafted in the fall of 1958 as a summary of the Politburo resolutions adopted in the summer of 1958 (but not adopted at the Politburo’s session of December 16, 1958) articulated this even more precisely: “Clerical reaction moves against the state and social order of the Hungarian People’s Republic beyond our borders as well. By this it lends support to the domestic reactionary forces lurking inside the churches.” Proposal for the Politburo on the struggle against clerical reaction, on the Church-state relations, and on combating the religious worldview. Budapest, December 4, 1958. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 108. ő. e. 107–108.
- ²⁰ Cf. Kádár’s remarks at the March 1, 1960 meeting of the Politburo: “The material mentions loyalty to the Vatican. This, too, is a complicated issue and I recommend we examine what we want. I would not make [the question of] loyalty to the Vatican now a topic of debate, or rather, I would break this into two. A Catholic bishop, if he is not faithful to the Vatican, is no longer a Catholic bishop. I would say that in questions of dogma we acknowledge that his own pope is in Rome, but if we recognize this, we can demand all the more that on secular issues he not accept the Vatican’s opinion.” Minutes on the Politburo’s session of March 1, 1960. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 172. ő. e. 32.
- ²¹ Balogh and Gergely, Állam, 1004–1005.
- ²² Report of the Rome embassy on the election and the person of John XXIII dated December 3, 1958. (Copy) MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-18/1958.
- ²³ Cf. Proposal for the Politburo on the struggle against clerical reaction, on the Church-state relations, and on combating the religious worldview. Budapest, December 4, 1958. MNL-OL M KS-288. f. 5. cs. 108. ő. e. 108.

- ²⁴ “In the area of foreign policy, too, the new pope wants to pursue a more flexible policy. At the end of the briefing Comrade Astafev stated as his opinion that under the new pope only the tactics have changed [...] he is doing this in a more dangerous manner than Pius did.” Pro memoria of János Péter on the visit of Astafev, counselor at the Soviet Embassy in Budapest, dated April 15, 1959. (Copy) MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-11/1959.
- ²⁵ Speech of Kádár. Minutes on the Politburo’s session of December 16, 1958. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 108. ő. e. 30.
- ²⁶ Minutes of the Politburo’s session of May 12, 1959. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 130. ő. e. 2.
- ²⁷ Minutes of the Politburo’s session of March 1, 1960. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 172 ő. e. 22–30.
- ²⁸ Proposal for the Politburo on the church policy. Budapest, May 8, 1959. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 130. ő. e. 91.
- ²⁹ Cf. Fejérdy, “Aux origines,” 396–97.
- ³⁰ Proposal on the invitation of nine members of the Bench of Bishops by the pope. Budapest, April 21, 1959. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0010-5/1959.
- ³¹ This opinion had advocates in the Politburo as well. Cf. Fejérdy, “Aux origines,” 404–407.
- ³² There is no doubt that, in addition to the power relations of the factions determining Hungarian church policy, the Soviets’ stance played a decisive role in the negative reply to the pope’s 1959 invitation: “if the Bench of Bishops there receives an invitation of this sort, the Soviet comrades do not take notice of it.” Proposal on the invitation of nine members of the Bench of Bishops by the pope. Budapest, April 21, 1959. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0010-5/1959.
- ³³ Melloni, *Altra Roma*, 37–42.
- ³⁴ Roccucci, “Russian Observers,” 51–52. The political preparations for the first Prague Christian Peace Conference took place at the conference held in Karlovy Vary, the admission to the WCC in the spring of 1961, following the conference of the socialist church affairs offices held in Karlovy Vary, and the first Pan-Orthodox Congress was organized in the spring of 1961 on the island of Rhodes. Report for the Politburo on the conference of socialist offices for church affairs held in Karlovy Vary. June 2, 1961. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 0014-6/1961; and *History of Vatican II*, Vol I, 324.
- ³⁵ Pro memoria on the invitation of nine members of the Bench of Bishops by the pope. Budapest, February 19, 1959. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0010/1959. 1–5.
- ³⁶ Report on the Catholic Church-state relations, Budapest, January 30, 1960. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1960/5. ő. e. 23–31: “On the part of both the Vatican and the reactionary members of the Bench of Bishops there are hopes that the

Hungarian bishops' journey to the Vatican may be realized. In the future, too, heightened care must be taken that the ties between the Vatican and the Hungarian clergy be confined to ever smaller degrees. In actual doctrinal, dogmatic, ceremonial questions guidance from Rome must be permitted for the time being as long as it does not endanger, even indirectly, the state's interests. Traveling to the Vatican must not be made to appear impossible to the bishops henceforth either. Leaving this illusion intact will provide us an opportunity to follow closely the conduct and tactics of both the Vatican and the Hungarian bishops. In addition to this, it can be used as a means of disciplining as well."

- ³⁷ Proposal for the Politburo. Budapest, March 25, 1960, in Ólmosi, *Mindszenty*, 74–82.
- ³⁸ Regarding the Prague Christian Peace Conference the following decisions were reached: a permanent presidium must be set up for the PCPC and the central secretariat established to organize the first peace conference must be retained; members of the PCPC henceforth everywhere must "openly and sincerely" champion the building of socialism and the Soviet Union's foreign policy; care must be taken that the theologians of the PCPC do not become isolated but cooperate with the other international peace movements, such as the World Peace Council, the Women's International Democratic Federation, or the World Youth Council. Cf. Report for the Politburo on the conference of socialist offices for church affairs held in Karlovy Vary. June 2, 1961. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 0014-6/1961.
- ³⁹ The third area designated in the Puzin-Karpov report, the organization of a pan-Orthodox assembly—since in practice it did not concern the European socialist countries—was not discussed at the Karlovy Vary conference. The preparations for the First Pan-Orthodox Congress, held on the island of Rhodes in the spring of 1961, must have taken place in a different forum. *History of Vatican II*, Vol I, 324.
- ⁴⁰ Report for the Politburo on the conference of socialist offices for church affairs held in Karlovy Vary. June 2, 1961. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 0014-6/1961. Cf. Fejérdy, "Presenza ungherese," 145.
- ⁴¹ Information on the preparation of the Ecumenical Council. Rome, January 14, 1961. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Olaszország 5/b-001296/1961. It is also typical of the image formed of the Council that Gyula Simó interpreted the plan to restore the permanent diaconate in an anti-Communist context as well, when he called the deacons wearing civilian attire highly effective instruments of religious agitation among the "proletarian masses."
- ⁴² It is in this climate that we can interpret the state security organs' plan to create a national Church based around the Diocese of Eger, to separate the Hungarian Church from the Holy See; proposal to establish an anti-Council atmosphere along Catholic-Protestant-sectarian lines, etc. Fejérdy, "Presenza ungherese," 144–45.

- ⁴³ Roccucci, "Russian Observers," 54–55; and *History of Vatican II*, Vol I., 324.
- ⁴⁴ Roccucci, "Russian Observers," 58–61; and Melloni, *Altra Roma*, 41, 75.
- ⁴⁵ According to the report of the minister to Rome, "The Soviet ambassador is a firm proponent of us allowing two or three bishops to attend the Council on the Hungarian side. As to whether they were sending bishops from the Baltic territories he gave an evasive reply, declaring that the question of the Baltic Catholics, who make up a negligible small percentage of the Soviet Union's population, is one issue, but the question of a representation of Catholics in Poland or Hungary at the Council is again an entirely different issue. In his opinion, we should just send our most reliable bishops, and not concern ourselves about whether the Soviet Union gives or doesn't give the Baltic Catholic bishops permission to attend." Meeting of the Soviet, Polish and Hungarian ambassadors to Rome on Vatican issues. Rome, March 21, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Olaszország, 5/f-003337/1962.
- ⁴⁶ Directives for the Hungarian standpoint to be presented at the conference of the socialist church affairs offices (Budapest, April 25–28, 1962). Budapest, April 12, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 0028-7/1962.
- ⁴⁷ For a brief summary of the conference, see: Report on the conference of the leaders of the socialist offices of church affairs. Budapest, May 9, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 0028-13/1962.
- ⁴⁸ Ibid.
- ⁴⁹ The titles of the two papers also attest to the political approach: "The Vatican's Present Political Conduct." Report of the Polish Office of church affairs at the Budapest conference of the leaders of the socialist offices of church affairs. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 0028-10/b/1962; and "The Vatican's Policy. The Aims of the Approaching Vatican Council." Report of A. A. Puzin, chairman of the Soviet Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults at the Budapest conference of the leaders of the socialist offices of church affairs. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 0028-10/a/1962.
- ⁵⁰ The expression is used by Żabiński: "The Vatican's Present Political Conduct." Report of the Polish Office of Church Affairs at the Budapest conference of the leaders of the socialist offices of church affairs. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 0028-10/b/1962. 6.
- ⁵¹ Żabiński in this connection referred, for example, to the Eucharistic Congress in Munich (July 31–August 7, 1960).
- ⁵² Similarly, see Roccucci, "Russian Observers," 60–61; and Melloni, *Altra Roma*, 56.
- ⁵³ Seemingly contradicting this is that according to both rapporteurs the Council had already been decided, and the fall session would be only a brief ratification, "just for show." By participating they likely wanted to demonstrate more the

successful policy of the “progressives.” An indication of this is that Puzin pointed out that support for the “progressive” wing must not be limited to the Council: “Our task is to strive to establish relations and contacts with the masses of believing Catholics, with Catholic mass organizations, meanwhile keeping in view, not just in the area of the Church but also social organizations, the need to spur them on to more active action for the sake of peace.”

- ⁵⁴ Minutes of the national meeting of May 12, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0010–2/1962.
- ⁵⁵ Török, “Vatikán,” 25–27. The specific content of the Tisserant–Nikodim agreement is disputed. Cf. Riccardi, *Vaticano e Mosca*, 278–84; Turbanti, “Problema del comunismo,” 157–60; Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 81–82; Mackiewicz, *In the Shadow*, 89–93.
- ⁵⁶ Minutes of the national meeting of May 12, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0010–2/1962.
- ⁵⁷ Note for the Hungarian ambassador in Rome. May 24, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–J–1–j. Olaszország 1945–1964. 5/b–005204/1962. On the duties the minister to Rome had in maintaining contacts with the Vatican, see: Information of the Foreign Ministry for József Száll, Hungarian ambassador to Rome, on Hungarian–Vatican relations. April 14, 1962, published in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 62–63.
- ⁵⁸ The Politburo discussed relieving the minister to Rome, Gyula Simó, on April 19, 1962. Minutes of the Politburo’s session of April 19, 1962. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 5. cs. 263. ő. e. 71. His successor, József Száll, presented his credentials to Italian President Antonio Segni on June 19, 1962. Andreides, “Magyar–olasz kapcsolatok,” 2.
- ⁵⁹ A reply was very late in coming, dated only September 13 and October 17: Answer of Gyula Simó, ambassador to Rome to the request of the ÁEH. September 13, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–J–1–j. Olaszország 1945–1964. 5/b–005204/3/1962; International proposals for the Second Vatican Council regarding church policy. October 17, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–J–1–j. Olaszország 1945–1964. 5/b–005204/4–1962.
- ⁶⁰ In addition to continuous inquiries about the Hungarian bishops’ reactions to the Council, it was with the aim of obtaining intelligence and spreading disinformation abroad that the ÁEH organized jointly with the Hungarian state security organs, for example, the pilgrimage to Lourdes, but Polikárp Radó’s previously mentioned visit in the late summer of 1962 had similarly obtained and provided information. “In our judgment Professor Radó’s journey was useful, and we can use the detailed information obtained from him during our preparations for the Second Vatican Council.” Information on the Austrian and Italian trip of Prof. Polikárp Radó (between July 10 and August 25, 1962). MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0022–18/1962. 4.
- ⁶¹ Cf. The Ecumenical Council. Information material provided by the Polish state security services. Warsaw, June 18, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 175–214.

- ⁶² Proposal on the Hungarian participation in the Second Vatican Council. June 5, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-9/1962.
- ⁶³ Proposal for the Politburo on the Hungarian participation in the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 7, 1962. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 267. ő. e. 174-76.
- ⁶⁴ Proposal on the Hungarian participation in the Second Vatican Council. June 5, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-9/1962.
- ⁶⁵ Minutes of the Politburo's session June 12, 1962. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 267. ő. e. 6.
- ⁶⁶ Proposal for the Politburo. Budapest, July 23, 1962. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 274 ő. e. 83.
- ⁶⁷ Minutes of the Politburo's session August 7, 1962. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 274 ő. e. 6.
- ⁶⁸ Draft on the policy to adopt regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-8/1962.
- ⁶⁹ The memorandum prepared for Gyula Kállai on the basis of the draft plan, applying this expressly to the Bench of Bishops, read as follows: "The balance of political division within the Bench of Bishops, cultivated over a long time, would trend unfavorably for us if of the Bench of Bishops we considered only Hamvas worthy of traveling. In the event of multiple persons going abroad the reactionary wing of the Bench of Bishops would become more isolated. We would reject the petitions of the extremely reactionary members of the Bench of Bishops to travel abroad by citing their political conduct. (Bishops Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár, Miklós Dudás of Hajdúdorog, Archabbot Norbert Legányi of Pannonhalma, etc.)." Memorandum for Gyula Kállai. Budapest, August 21, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-10/1962.
- ⁷⁰ Memorandum on the official standpoint of the Czechoslovak government about the participation of bishops at the Council. Budapest, July 14, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Olaszország. 4/a-006467/1962.
- ⁷¹ Memorandum for Gyula Kállai on the Czechoslovak standpoint about the participation in the Council. Budapest, August 16, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-13/1962, ill. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-12/1962.
- ⁷² Although in Píšek's briefing there is no talk of the Czechoslovaks explicitly urging the Holy See to invite also the diocesan leaders of non-episcopal rank to the Council (this information was recorded only in connection with Karel Hrůza's visit to Budapest on August 14-15, 1962), based on the document drafted in the Foreign Ministry about the talks with Píšek, according to which the Czechoslovak government wished to have the Holy See recognize its right to determine the composition of the delegation, it may be surmised that the Czechoslovaks had

already adopted this position by this time, and they must have informed the officials in charge of Hungarian church policy as well.

⁷³ Memorandum for Gyula Kállai. Budapest, August 21, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-10/1962. From the beginning these stalling tactics were an important element of the Hungarian position. Already in the first proposal on council participation they argued in favor of making the decision public later. Cf. Proposal for the Politburo on the Hungarian participation in the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 7, 1962. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 267. ő. e. 174-76. Similar stalling tactics in the case of Czechoslovakia are recounted in Hal'ko, "Comunisti slovacchi," 167-69.

⁷⁴ The Holy See was apprised of the conditions described above (1. that the invitation be addressed not to specific persons but to the dioceses so that the government could thus designate the persons traveling to the Council; 2. that the Vatican provide a guarantee that there will be no provocation during the Council on the part of the Czech emigration, and that neither Czechoslovakia nor the socialist countries will be attacked at the Council) through Italy's ambassador to Prague. Cf. Fejérdy, "Szocialista tömb," 214, note 13.

⁷⁵ Proposal for the Politburo on the Hungarian participation in the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 21, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-14/1962.

⁷⁶ Ibid.

⁷⁷ Proposal for the Politburo on the Hungarian participation in the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 28, 1962; and Minutes of the Politburo's session September 4, 1962. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 277. ő. e. 63-66., ill. 5-6.

⁷⁸ Report at the national conference of the ÁEH's employees held on September 19, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0010-3/1962. 2-3.

3.

The Catholic Church in Hungary

3.1. THE STATE OF THE HUNGARIAN CATHOLIC CHURCH IN THE PERIOD OF PREPARATIONS

When Pope John XXIII announced the future Second Vatican Council, the state of the Hungarian Catholic Church was determined by the sum of several forces, each fueled by a different source. The most prominent—and perhaps most significant—is without doubt the anti-Church (and increasingly anti-religious) policy outlined above, which, while striving to reduce the weight of the Church in society, simultaneously also sought to utilize its structures pragmatically to achieve its own ends. The societal changes occurring after the 1956 Revolution, to which reference has also been made, exerted a less conspicuous, though similarly important, effect on the Church. As was alluded to above, the socio-psychological changes linked to the failure of the revolution also affected the members of the Church directly and personally; also the resignation stemming from the feelings of hopelessness simultaneously promoted collectivization of agriculture. As a result of collectivization, however, a significant portion of the population had moved to towns, which entailed the dissolution of the village communities, which had provided the traditional framework for religiosity, and a reduction in the number of believers. Finally, the consolidation beginning in the 1960s and relative prosperity brought with it the spread of the consumerist mentality and practical materialism.

All of these societal processes, as well as the previously described anti-religious church policy both in the region and in Europe, resulted in an unparalleled secularization in Hungary.¹ “In contrast to the Western-type secularization ‘socialist modernization’ brought into existence a peculiar developmental model of religion and Church,” in which “the forced nature of the state-party centralization in fact strengthened the existence of a traditional opposite pole, thereby guaranteeing the function of religion/

Church precisely where Western-type secularization had eliminated it.”² Whereas before 1945, 60–70 percent of the Catholic faithful (according to the data of the 1949 population census 67 percent of the population) actively participated in religious life, in the early 1960s this proportion—apart from 40–50 percent attendance for the major holidays—was about 20 percent in the case of the Catholic Church according to contemporary estimates.³

In any event, the contemporary church leadership, it would appear, scarcely noticed the broader societal processes behind the large-scale secularization and regarded first and foremost the state’s church policy as the main cause.⁴ Yet this situation assessment cannot be regarded as so erroneous if we take into account that it was precisely because of the oppressor state’s church policy that the contemporary church split—to use Miklós Tomka’s metaphor—into “two tracks.” We must add, however, that the distinction between official and underground (or “loyal” and “reactionary”) churches is valid primarily from the point of view of the regime, since it did not succeed in actually dividing the Church despite all attempts of church policy in this direction. As for the question of its relationship to the state, several trends undoubtedly coexisted alongside one another within the Church; under the surface, however, these factions had many points of contact, and more than once a figure of the “official” Church simultaneously also ensured the possibility of the “underground” Church’s survival, at least by assuring those persecuted by the state of at least his moral support, in spite of external measures.

The duality perceptible in the Church is most difficult to pinpoint in the case of the faithful. The existence of the two tendencies is attested, in any event, in the area of religious education, for instance. Whereas official religious education in schools, authorized by the state but also hampered by all means possible,⁵ and the catechesis on church premises that complemented it, belonged more to the profile of the official Church, the work of the illegal “base communities” (less controllable by the state and therefore considered dangerous), can be seen unmistakably as part of the persecuted, underground Church.

It is somewhat easier to demonstrate the split into “two tracks” within the priesthood than among the faithful, though here the scale between the two extremes was likewise broad. Undoubtedly the peace priest movement, and especially its active members, represented one end point. In vain did the Bench of Bishops try after 1956 to bring the peace priest movement under its

control, and thereby neutralize it, by establishing *Opus Pacis*; the membership of the peace priest movement, reorganized within the framework of the Catholic Committee of the National Peace Council (*Országos Béketanács Katolikus Bizottsága*), persistently played an important role as the loyal servant of the state in carrying out church policy.⁶ Likewise belonging to the official Church were the approximately 5,400 priests authorized by the state to perform their functions,⁷ though among these too there were numerous priests who had participated in the life of the “illegal” Church, leading small groups and so on.⁸ Finally, apart from priests permitted to exercise their functions—who also conducted illegal activity—the majority of the underground Church was formed by the priests of the disbanded religious orders. The number of illegal priests was increased also by illegally ordained seminarians who had been expelled from the Central Seminary. Based on the new church policy announced in 1958, the authorities continued to take severe action against this group while simultaneously accepting the official Church. Because there was less possibility of monitoring them through the official hierarchy or the structure of the ÁEH, to observe this group and simultaneously disband the “illegal” communities led by them priest agents, making up some 3–4% of the priesthood, were used to a particularly large degree,⁹ and beyond the administrative means aimed at their isolation they sought to achieve their liquidation also via arrests and trials.¹⁰

The state of the Hungarian Catholic Church was also well reflected in the Bench of Bishops, of the greatest interest to us from the point of the view of the Council. Nevertheless, in weakening the prelacy, it was first of all state church policy that played the central role, attempting, by dismissing bishops displeasing to it (those who held views on the state similar to those of the “illegal” Church), to press the chief pastors in office, as the main representatives of the official Church, into its own service. This church policy manifested itself more and more forcefully in the composition of the hierarchy from the late 1950s on.

As has already been mentioned, in January 1959 only eight of Hungary’s eleven dioceses were headed by consecrated diocesan bishops. By the opening of the Council on October 11, 1962 this proportion had worsened even further: by this time only five dioceses had a diocesan bishop as its leader. This was only partly a consequence of the state’s dismissal of those bishops it deemed “reactionary.” Beginning in the second half of the 1950s

the fact that some of the bishops appointed prior to 1948 had died and Rome had been unable to fill their places it became an increasingly palpable problem. One by one, the Holy See's attempts in this direction had foundered on the resistance of the Hungarian government: following the enactment of Legal Edict No. 20 of 1951, not a single diocesan bishop was consecrated, and the state withdrew, either absolutely or at least for a brief time, permission to function from more than one of the four consecrated auxiliary bishops.¹¹ Legal Edict No. 22 of 1957, issued after the defeat of the revolution, in turn even further broadened the circle of ecclesiastical offices that required state approval to occupy. And naturally, only priests also considered reliable from the state's point of view could receive such posts.

It was due to the dismissal of the diocesan bishops that the archiepiscopal see of Esztergom and the episcopal sees of Veszprém and Vác were vacant. Esztergom became leaderless at Christmas 1948: apart from some 100 hours spent free during the 1956 Revolution, Cardinal József Mindszenty was unable to occupy his archiepiscopal see, first due to his imprisonment and house arrest, and later because of his internal exile at the Embassy of the United States. After multiple dismissals the bishop of Vác, József Pétery, was interned because of his "reactionary" activity on April 6, 1953, and although in October 1956 he, too, returned to his see, after the defeat of the revolution he moved back to Hejce, where subsequently he lived under house arrest until his death in 1967. Also joining the bishop of Vác at the former episcopal summer residence in Hejce was Bishop Bertalan Badalik of Veszprém, who was dismissed on August 15, 1957 because of his consistent conduct in defense of the Church. The three dioceses left without head pastors were managed by apostolic administrators. In the period under discussion administration of the Archdiocese of Esztergom (even though the diocese had an auxiliary bishop in the person of Imre Szabó) was overseen by Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer, first as vicar-general and later apostolic administrator. The Diocese of Veszprém was run by Sándor Klempa, and that of Vác by auxiliary Bishop Vince Kovács, likewise as apostolic administrators.

In the case of three additional dioceses (Eger, Kalocsa, and Pécs), it was the death of the diocesan bishop that created the vacancy. The archiepiscopal see of Eger had fallen vacant with the death of Gyula Czapik back on April 25, 1956, and because the Holy See, due to the reasons indicated above, was unable to install a new bishop to head the diocese, Pál Brezanóczy managed

the diocese based on John XXIII's appointment, first as vicar and later, from 1959 on, as apostolic administrator. The head pastor of the Diocese of Pécs, Ferenc Rogács, had died already during the preparatory phase of the Council, on February 20, 1961. In lieu of a successor, the vicar capitular, József Cserhádi, assumed leadership of the diocese. Likewise in 1961 the third archdiocese, the archiepiscopal see of Kalocsa, also fell vacant upon the death of József Grósz on October 3. The state refused to grant approval to his auxiliary bishop, János Bárd, consecrated in 1951, to perform his duties. Thus, beginning in 1961 the diocese was headed by Imre Várkonyi as vicar capitular.¹²

The remaining five dioceses (i.e., Székesfehérvár, Győr, Szombathely, Csanád, and the Greek Catholic Diocese of Hajdúdorog) were headed by older bishops appointed and consecrated prior to the Communist takeover. Thus, their deaths could also be expected within a foreseeable time (according to the minutes of the episcopal conferences, more than one of them were chronically ill). The dean of the Hungarian episcopate was the 81-year-old bishop of Székesfehérvár, Lajos Shvoy, appointed in 1927, whom the leaders of church policy increasingly attempted to isolate because of his "reactionary" behavior. He was followed in terms of age by the bishop of Győr, Kálmán Papp (73 years old in 1959), who had headed the diocese since 1946. Next in line came the 69-year-old Endre Hamvas (bishop of Csanád since 1944) and 67-year-old Sándor Kovács (bishop of Szombathely since 1944). Among the diocesan bishops the youngest, at 57 years of age, was Miklós Dudás, head of the Greek Catholic Diocese of Hajdúdorog since 1939; however, his activity also was significantly restricted because of his "reactionary" mentality.

The auxiliary bishop of Vác, Vince Kovács (consecrated in 1940 and 73 years of age in 1959), and the 69-year-old apostolic administrator of Esztergom, Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer, numbered among the older members of the episcopate, while the remaining auxiliary bishops and prelates represented the younger generation. All except the 61-year-old Sándor Klempa were in their fifties: the auxiliary bishop of Esztergom, Imre Szabó, was 58; the auxiliary bishop of Eger, Mihály Endrey, 54; while the auxiliary bishop of Székesfehérvár, Imre Kisberk, and the archabbot of Pannonhalma, Norbert Legányi, were 53 years of age. The youngest member of the

episcopate was the 47-year-old apostolic administrator of Eger, Pál Brezanóczy.

As has been alluded to, in the case of the chief pastors considered the most dangerous the state either dismissed them or did not approve them to perform their duties. The activity of the actually functioning prelates and the possibility of their attendance at the Council was determined in large measure by what view the state took of them. Based on the available documents, apart from the aforementioned Lajos Shvoy and Miklós Dudás, Norbert Legányi, archabbot of Pannonhalma, Imre Kisberk and Mihály Endrey, auxiliary bishops of Székesfehérvár and Eger respectively, and Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer, apostolic administrator of Esztergom, counted as expressly “reactionary” figures in the eyes of the state.¹³ Regarded as loyal to the state were Endre Hamvas, bishop of Csanád and chairman of the Bench of Bishops, as well as Pál Brezanóczy and Sándor Klempa, apostolic administrators of Eger and Veszprém respectively, though the other bishops were also acceptable to the state—albeit to varying degrees.¹⁴

Finally, for the Hungarian Catholic Church—and the bishops in particular—the ambition of the state’s church policy to separate,¹⁵ or at least isolate, the local Church from the Vatican, seen as the chief political and ideological opponent, represented a serious difficulty. The state had not only prevented personal contacts by not letting any Hungarian prelate (or priest) visit Rome since 1948 but also monitored and obstructed correspondence between the Holy See and the bishops. Thus, curial documents pertaining explicitly to the internal affairs of the Church also were frequently “misplaced.”¹⁶

Under such circumstances, the delivery of the urgent letter from Secretary of State Cardinal Domenico Tardini, dated February 8, 1959, inviting the Hungarian episcopate on behalf of the pope to visit Rome, aroused great consternation among the bishops. It is typical of their confusion that no one raised the issue at the bishops’ conference of February 17, 1959, and it was mentioned only after the close of the session; however, in the absence of the ailing Archbishop József Grósz of Kalocsa, no substantive decision was made.¹⁷

In any case, the uncertainty was more typical of the more loyal members of the episcopate. Although they must have been almost certain that the state would not consent to their travel, the bishops considered “reactionary” by the state (Dudás and Shvoy), along with Sándor Kovács and Kálmán Papp,

nevertheless expressed their desire to attend; to this end, the first two even took steps independently of the other members of the Bench of Bishops. The bishops loyal to the state (and thus precisely those with the greatest chance of receiving permission to travel) likewise considered it necessary to honor the pope's invitation. Nevertheless the decision did not appear simple to them. The primary reason for this was that they were torn between their desire to maintain their loyalty to the Church and their duty to remain acceptable in the eyes of the state. Archbishop Grösz articulated the concerns of the bishops who thought this way, when he pointed out the risks of the potential journey as well. After all, if they were to reach Rome, there they would have to reveal the actual situation to the pope. This, however, could entail the negative consequence of worsening the bishops' relationship with the government making their position more difficult. "In his opinion a lot of thought needs to be given to this [issue], he would not like to be accused of ill-will because of the forthcoming moves by the Vatican."¹⁸ In addition, rendering the situation still more difficult was that under the great pressure through their loyalty to the state precisely these bishops had compromised themselves before the Holy See in several respects.¹⁹ While the leaders of state church policy were still interested at this time in further inciting the conflicts between the Hungarian bishops and the Holy See stemming from this, the loyal prelates, caught between a rock and a hard place, wished to postpone the journey even if granted permission for as long as possible.²⁰

3.2. HUNGARIAN COUNCIL RECOMMENDATIONS

In keeping with Pope John XXIII's intention, the chairman of the Council Preparatory Commission, Secretary of State Cardinal Tardini, in a letter dated June 18, 1959 asked the bishops of the world Church to make suggestions for determining the work plan of the future Council. Despite the fact that the invitation of the Hungarian bishops to visit *ad limina* in February 1959 had been unsuccessful the Council's Preparatory Commission did not hesitate to ask the Hungarian Bench of Bishops to send their recommendations as well. This is indicated, in any case, by the fact that, to our knowledge, at least five diocesan bishops (Shvoy, Grösz, Hamvas, Papp, and Dudás) received Cardinal Tardini's letter regarding this in the second half of July.²¹

The bishops—with the exception of Dudás²²—had soon duly prepared their recommendations. The reply of Archbishop József Grösz of Kalocsa was the first to be finished, on August 24, 1959. Indicative of the Hungarian bishops' interest in the Council is that within a short time, in the first days of September Bishops Endre Hamvas of Csanád, Kálmán Papp of Győr and Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár had also written their *vota*.²³

In the case of Archbishop Grösz, we do not know whether he asked anyone for advice when preparing his council proposals. About the background to the drafting of the other replies, however, we do have knowledge. Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád—as he informed Cardinal Tardini²⁴—asked three of his parish priests, Dr. Lóránt Pongrácz of Apátfalva, Dr. Lajos Hanzély of Békés, and Dr. Endre Marosi of Békéscsaba, to work out proposals for the Council. Hamvas relied on the draft prepared by Pongrácz, even lifting numerous passages from it verbatim, but wrote his reply letter revising and supplementing it with his own ideas. The brief draft proposal written by Hanzély was not really suitable to be taken into account. It is surprising, on the other hand, that the draft submitted by Marosi matches what our available sources unanimously attribute to Bishop Kálmán Papp of Győr: the currently accessible Hungarian texts deviate slightly, presumably this is due merely to differences in translation going back to the common Latin original. It is unclear when and how the draft plan of the parish priest from Békéscsaba reached the bishop of Győr so that it came into the possession of the ÁEH as Kálmán Papp's recommendation ahead of Hamvas's letter and the draft proposals he requested from his advisors.²⁵

Like the bishop of Csanád, Lajos Shvoy did not write his proposals alone either. Rather, as he also mentioned in the accompanying letter to the Vatican, he asked the opinions of his auxiliary bishop, Imre Kisberk, and a few of his trustworthy priests, including, for example, theological instructor Gyula Molnár, parish priest of the Church of the Good Shepherd in Székesfehérvár, and László Németh, the parish priest of Ráckeresztúr.²⁶ Although the reply sent to Rome contained, in addition to his priests' proposals, the points submitted by Kisberk as well,²⁷ the document was not signed by the auxiliary bishop (examples of which are found in the case of other countries),²⁸ but sent to the Holy See with Shvoy's signature only.

It is the common feature of the Hungarian bishops' Latin-language²⁹ proposals that they articulate the questions to be discussed by the Council

based mainly on practical experiences, arranging them in brief items by headings, frequently unsupported by theological arguments or explanations, or even a proposed solution. The overwhelming majority of the topics submitted pertained to specific questions of church discipline, in the presentation of which the authors' fundamentally legalistic, rule-based way of thinking can easily be detected. While Archbishop Grósz and Bishop Hamvas attempted to discuss the various proposals grouped according to theological subjects (Grósz: questions of church discipline and morals; liturgical questions, doctrinal questions; Hamvas: articles of faith, morality, church discipline, liturgy), this systematization is lacking in the case of the other *vota*.

The great merit of the proposals is that they faithfully reflect the practical problems confronting the Catholic spiritual pastors in the Hungary of the 1950s. It is natural, therefore, that in each text the question of the ideological and political system determining the Church's living circumstances, Communism, appears either explicitly or implicitly. Archbishop Grósz used quite nuanced wording: rather than demanding a condemnation of the false doctrines, he instead urged the Church to establish its position on the most disputed questions, among them, listed by topic, materialism, socialism and Communism. He also hastened to demonstrate common points of agreement, making a distinction between the ideal and the practice of Communism. He stressed that the Church condemned not the ideal but rather godlessness and defended the freedom of people in all social orders. Bishop Hamvas intended to blunt the edge of the proposal asking for a condemnation of Marxism by placing the problem in a more general context, the roots of which—like other errors—he saw in the ignorance of the doctrine of Providence. It is noteworthy at the same time that the bishop of Csanád attached to the draft, which originally raised the problem only in general terms, the question of Marxism in concrete terms as well. In fact, going further he asked the Council to make official the doctrine of the two perfect societies (*societas perfecta*) in order to thereby protect the rights of the Church against totalitarian regimes proclaiming the absolute power of the state. Bishop Shvoy resorted quite openly to condemning all forms of materialism, including in this the consumer materialism characteristic of capitalist regimes, "which poisons the believers' souls, because it proclaims the pursuit of ephemeral goods and earthly pleasures." Beyond the demand

for a rejection of ideology, their proposals urging the declaration of the bishops' freedom to administer their dioceses, as well as the extension of the hierarchy's authority beyond questions of faith and morals to other areas of life, were likewise meant to condemn the concrete practice of the socialist dictatorship indirectly.

In harmony with the papal intent of *aggiornamento*, numerous proposals aimed to make the life of the faithful simpler, as well as include them in apostolic work in the changed world. All the bishops agreed that, given the prevailing Hungarian conditions (not simply secularized, but outright militantly atheistic), a more flexible regulation of the precepts relating to attending mass on Sundays and holidays, Lent and the taking of the sacraments was important. The specific changes proposed in the area of the liturgy (simpler and more easily understood ceremonies through the expanded use of the vernacular) also derived largely from this same consideration. Lajos Shvoy alone emphasized the importance of involving the faithful more intensively into the liturgical acts, though he, too, believed this to be achievable via papal decrees. It was likewise the bishop of Székesfehérvár who pointed to the possibility, if only in general terms, of utilizing modern devices in the area of evangelism, and he mentioned the necessity of renewing theology and its more practical teaching. While Bishops Kálmán Papp and Lajos Shvoy considered it important to prevent abuse of the sacrament of marriage and emphasized the necessity of accepting children and undertaking their religious upbringing, Bishop Hamvas did not incorporate into his *votum* any of the detailed discussion about questions of morals in marriage contained in Dr. Pongrácz's. The bishop of Csanád also omitted the point of the original draft proposing, in addition to the requirement to maintain celibacy, to resolve the status of apostate priests. Thus, only Shvoy's letter contained the Hungarian bishops' insistence on the traditions relating to celibacy. To make living their vocation easier, the bishop of Székesfehérvár also recommended the communal form of life for the secular priests.

On the issue of censorship Papp and Shvoy interpreted *aggiornamento* in opposite ways: whereas the bishop of Győr believed the *Index Librorum Prohibitorum* (Index of Prohibited Books) could be eliminated, the ordinary of Székesfehérvár felt it was necessary to revise and renew the list, taking into account new means of communication. Similarly, we find no unitary

stance in the Hungarian bishops' attitude to ecumenism either. Papp's draft proposal called for vigorous action against mixed marriages between the various denominations. The lone proposal of a dogmatic character, emphasizing the grace-mediating role of the Virgin Mary, similarly did not favor the cause of unity among Christians; it was precisely out of this consideration that Hamvas disagreed with it. It appears that, although the demand for good relations with the various denominations was not far from the intentions of the Hungarian clergy, they conceived of unity among Christians in terms of the other churches coming back to the Catholic Church. This is indicated, in addition to the above recommendations, by the proposal of the bishop of Székesfehérvár requesting an understanding regulation "for the pastors and faithful of the various denominations returning to the bosom of the Church."

Summarizing the Hungarian *vota* we can state that—as could be expected—they fit into that category of council recommendations linked more with the image of the Church of previous centuries than with the new outlook of the coming Council, which took into account the "signs of the times." This group of *vota*, more canonical-casuistic than pastoral in their approach, were most typical of churches in hegemonic positions in the Latin countries and of local church hierarchies located in non-Catholic lands or threatened by a hostile political environment.³⁰ The conservative thinking of the Hungarian bishops was fueled, among other things, by the circumstance that within the bounds of the anti-religious Communist regime they saw no other possibility of the Church's survival than solidifying internal church discipline and ensuring outward freedom. At the same time, their ambition to strengthen church discipline did not rule out the possibility of asking for flexibility or relaxations in a number of areas out of pastoral considerations. It is precisely these proposals that provide us a glimpse of sorts into the state of the Hungarian Catholic Church prior to Vatican II, one characterized by a duality: rigidity, appearing in the first place on the theoretical plane and stemming from the prevailing conservative outlook; and an attempt to adapt to the given circumstances.

However, despite the numerous urgent church policy issues, in vain did the Hungarian bishops show serious interest in the preparatory work of the Council, the state leadership, which saw the Holy See as its chief ideological and political opponent, did not permit the recommendations to be sent. For

a time, it did occur to those directing Hungarian church policy to ask “whether it would be desirable nonetheless to send out a properly worded reply through the bishops to Rome, which would take into account the position and perspective of the Roman Catholic Church in a country building socialism.”³¹ In the end, however, in view of the Vatican’s “hostile conduct” towards the socialist countries, they rejected this possibility, waiting for the Holy See to take positive steps first.³² On September 17, 1959 Károly Olt, chairman of the ÁEH, knowing the responses of Archbishop Grósz and Bishop Papp, confirmed his earlier stance,³³ deciding that because they were not appropriate, they could not be sent to the Vatican.³⁴

Thanks, however, to the fact that Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár, considered the “most reactionary” of the diocesan bishops in office by the state, attempted to preserve his freedom to administer his diocese and therefore often deviated from official procedure in arranging matters, a Hungarian recommendation did arrive in Rome despite the decision of the church policy leadership. The bishop of Székesfehérvár in fact had not even notified the ÁEH commissioner of the letter from the Vatican that arrived at the episcopal residence on July 17, 1959,³⁵ and he managed to send his reply proposals, prepared on September 3, to Rome in secret as well. Perhaps it was through his western contact, Hildegard Steiger (who regularly visited Hungary as a tourist and was later watched by the Hungarian state security organs) that he managed to get the letter out of the country.³⁶ According to our present state of knowledge this letter, later posted from Germany,³⁷ is the only Hungarian reply to have actually reached the Council’s Preparatory Commission.³⁸ What made it possible to get Shvoy’s recommendations out of the country was, among other things, precisely that the state organs learned of their existence only after a significant delay: the bishop’s secretary (an agent codenamed at this time “Doktor”) was able to obtain for the state security organs auxiliary Bishop Imre Kisberk’s draft proposal, as well as the letter Shvoy sent to Rome, only in June 1962. Even though the recommendations sent to the Council’s Preparatory Commission (including that of the bishop of Székesfehérvár) were published in Rome in 1960, two years later Police Sergeant József Szeifert could only surmise that the document had arrived at the Vatican.³⁹

3.3. THE HUNGARIAN BISHOPS AND THE QUESTION OF COUNCIL ATTENDANCE

The rapid drafting of conciliar recommendations indicated that the Hungarian bishops displayed interest in the Council already from the outset. Naturally, some of the expectations for the Council were directed towards the renewal of religious life in Hungary.⁴⁰ The bishop of Szombathely, Sándor Kovács, for example, in his reflections during a retreat held at his episcopal see on February 26, 1962 voiced his conviction that the Council would bring about the inner renewal of the Church. Thus, in his opinion it would be those who currently declared the obsolete character of the Catholic Church and Christianity who would be forced to retreat. At the same time, based on a paper by Alajos Kövér, a Benedictine teacher in Pannonhalma, the bishop outlined the Council's prospective points as well. Starting from the premise that, according to the pope's intentions, the main task of the Council was to be "*renovatio* and *accomodatio*," he anticipated the renewal of the Church and the modernization of contemporary church practice in the following areas. First and foremost he saw a certain degree of decentralization of the episcopal office (without affecting papal primacy and infallibility), greater use of the national language in the liturgy, reform of the breviary, modernization of seminary training and the restoration of the permanent diaconate all to be conceivable. On the subject of church discipline, it was in the areas of marriage law and marriage ethics, as well as Lenten discipline, that he raised expectations for the Council. During the retreat he naturally addressed the question of ecumenism and the lay apostleship as well. Regarding the latter, he pointed out that in conducting apostolic work the existing ecclesiastical community organization could be relied upon to a large extent. Finally, Kovács summarized those duties which would fall to the clergy and the faithful in the wake of the Council. It was the obligation of the priests when speaking of the Church's teaching mission in their sermons to explain to the faithful the place of the Council in the life of the Church. In addition, the bishop pointed out that there was need to pray for the Council and to offer up suffering, and he called for a deepening of community between the priesthood and the faithful.⁴¹

Sándor Kovács's initiative cannot, of course, be regarded as an isolated phenomenon. This is indicated by, among other things, the fact that at the

meeting of the Bench of Bishops on March 13, 1962 the ordinaries unanimously agreed that under the terms of the pope's letter *Epistula ad clerum universum*,⁴² dated February 11, they would exhort their priests to offer the daily breviary, united as one with the pope, for the success of the Ecumenical Council and the unification of the various Christian denominations.⁴³

The announced Second Vatican Council also interested the Hungarian bishops not only because of its expected content and the hope of religious renewal but also particularly because it appeared to them a suitable occasion to enable them to resume direct contact with the Holy See. Although the bishops were aware that the possibility of their attendance ultimately depended on the state's decision, almost every bishop with permission to function trusted that he would receive the required state approval. To this end, most of them strove to avoid clashes with the state of any kind, and, hopeful that the council resolutions would allow them to represent the Church's interests more easily, displayed wide-ranging loyal conduct instead of pressing for a solution to acute issues.⁴⁴ The hopes of the bishops who wished to make the journey was fueled also by the fact that the state—out of tactical considerations—had decided back before the political decision concerning the composition of the delegation was reached to inform those concerned of the results of the decision at the last moment, after September 15. By doing so they not only left open the possibility of changing their positions should the need arise, but could also more easily exert pressure on the bishops, who were kept in the dark.⁴⁵

Naturally, it was the bishops most accepted by the state who had reason for optimism. Endre Hamvas, for example, already in the first months of 1962, when the leaders of Hungarian church policy still firmly rejected permitting participation in the Council, viewed it as a certainty that he would be allowed to attend.⁴⁶ It cannot be seen as coincidence that, as chairman of the Hungarian Bench of Bishops whose acceptability to the state was widely known, he received the first council invitation from the Holy See almost as a test following the failure of the feelers it put out through Internuncio Lardone. Soon after the delivery of the invitation, posted on May 10 by the Hungarian bishop's representative in Rome, István Mester, the bishop of Csanád duly took the first steps to obtain permission to attend the Council. To discuss the matter on May 24 Hamvas wrote to, then on May 30th visited in person, József Prantner. Finally, based on the ÁEH chairman's reply, he informed Cardinal

Gustavo Testa in a letter dated June 2 that he had received the invitation. At the same time, he indicated that he would send a final answer about his attendance only later but would like to avail himself of the room and board offered by the Holy See, should he be able to travel.⁴⁷

It was in the knowledge of the hopeful reply arriving from the bishop of Csanád that the Holy See on June 25 sent, likewise through István Mester, council invitations to all of the Hungarian bishops in office.⁴⁸ Thus, in the first days of July invitations were delivered to Bishops Sándor Kovács of Szombathely, Kálmán Papp of Győr, Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár, the Greek Catholic Bishop Miklós Dudás of Hajdúdorog as well as auxiliary Bishops Vince Kovács of Vác, Imre Kisberk of Székesfehérvár, and Imre Szabó of Esztergom.⁴⁹

The majority of bishops applied to the head of the State Office for Church Affairs for permission to attend the Council within a short time of receiving the invitation.⁵⁰ Lajos Shvoy, however, though he, too, had received the invitation letter on July 19,⁵¹ requested permission to attend only on August 28, more than a full month later.⁵² The reason for the delay was that he first wished to persuade his fellow bishops to adopt a firm stance. Shortly after receiving the invitation, therefore, on July 21 he turned in a letter to Endre Hamvas, chairman of the Bench of Bishops, explaining he could not believe “the rumor that the government would allow only three persons to go abroad.” In Shvoy’s view, because it was the obligation of every bishop to attend, the Bench of Bishops ought to declare that “either we all attend the Council [...] or no one attends.” The motivation for the letter to Hamvas may likely have been that Shvoy had obtained information alleging that the government would permit only three persons (namely Hamvas, Norbert Legányi and Pál Brezanóczy) to exit the country.⁵³ The state leadership learned of Shvoy’s initiative, which displays an interesting parallel with Wyszyński’s earlier stance, in part via agents and in part from Hamvas, and under the prevailing political constellation judged it to be extremely dangerous and hostile. For this reason not only did they determine that the bishop of Székesfehérvár had repeatedly compromised himself, they also encouraged Hamvas to reply by stating that he favored requesting permission individually.⁵⁴ The reply received from the chairman of the Bench of Bishops caused Shvoy great disappointment,⁵⁵ and although he continued to maintain his position that unified action by the Bench of Bishops would

be more proper, in late August he, too, separately applied to the ÁEH for permission to travel. In any case, having experienced that he had not been allowed even to express his thanks for the invitation to the Council, he did not attach great hopes to the success of his petition.⁵⁶

Like Shvoy, the auxiliary bishop of Esztergom, Imre Szabó, had also expected the bishops to arrange to obtain the travel permits together. Thus, he too began to apply for a passport only after receiving Hamvas's letter, first privately, then on September 12 turned to the ÁEH, indicating that he had not known that he should have started here. Apologizing for the tardy petition, he applied for rapid processing, so as not to be late, "if indeed he is on the list."⁵⁷

Among those bishops receiving invitations in the first round, Bishop Kálmán Papp of Győr asked József Prantner to be allowed to honor the council invitation on August 27—virtually the last to do so. Like a number of his fellow bishops he, too, indicated that the Holy See would cover the accommodations, food⁵⁸ and travel expenses.⁵⁹ At the same time, he assured the chairman of the ÁEH that "should my application be granted, during my stay abroad too, I would conduct myself and speak in the spirit of my oath taken to the Constitution of the Hungarian People's Republic, keeping in view the interests of the Hungarian People's Republic."⁶⁰ However, the question of the aged bishop's attendance would later end up on the desk of the ÁEH under a different set of circumstances.

Based on the consultation with the Czechoslovak colleagues, as we have seen, the leaders of Hungarian church policy also attempted, almost as if to seek recognition for the church policy *status quo*, to obtain invitations to the Council for, besides the consecrated bishops, diocesan leaders of non-episcopal rank. To this end they had Hamvas write a letter to Rome. The bishop of Csanád fulfilled this demand on August 24.⁶¹ Because in the attached cover letter to the Holy See Hamvas also informed the representative in Rome, István Mester, that this idea had originated in the Office for Church Affairs, which he could not avoid (nor did he want to, "so well-founded does the trust seem"⁶²), the idea of preventing the letter from being sent was raised. In any event the state leadership ultimately must have decided to send the letter out, but in vain did István Mester receive the Hungarian government's request as conveyed by Hamvas⁶³; by this time, as in the case of Czechoslovakia, the Holy See no longer wished to make concessions.⁶⁴ Thus, the

ÁEH, in order to still be able to ensure Pál Brezanóczy's attendance under the Politburo's resolution, worked out a new solution: citing Paragraph 224 of the Code of Canon Law, they sought to have the apostolic administrator of Eger sent to Rome as the plenipotentiary representative of a diocesan bishop.⁶⁵ The choice of the ÁEH fell upon the aged bishop of Győr, Kálmán Papp, who—citing his illness—appointed Brezanóczy as his procurator by a letter of proxy dated September 15.⁶⁶ After the ÁEH had acknowledged this commission, and Papp had informed John XXIII of it as well, the final obstacle to Brezanóczy's attendance at the Council was overcome.⁶⁷

While the Holy See did not wish to make it possible for ordinaries of non-episcopal rank to attend the Council, over the summer and fall it sent additional invitations to Hungary to the impeded bishops. However, in vain did several of those concerned indicate their desire to participate, the state did not consent to their travel. ÁEH employees met with those concerned to notify them of the rejection personally. Naturally the by-passed prelates, such as Bárd, Belon and Endrey, were not surprised by the negative response.⁶⁸ Nor could those bishops in office whose "reactionary" status in the eyes of the state was well-known (e.g., Shvoy and Kisberk) have hoped to be allowed to depart for Rome. When, for example, Károly Lovrek and Jakab Herling called on Imre Kisberk to convey to him the negative reply, citing the fact that relations between the Bishopric of Székesfehérvár and the state were "unsatisfactory," during the polite conversation the latter stated that he knew he would not be allowed to travel to the Council because he had not given up his convictions.⁶⁹

However, the refusal confused those prelates who displayed loyalty to the state. Kálmán Papp, Sándor Klempa, and Vince Kovács at the same time expressed their hope that they would be allowed to attend the Council's second session. It is indicative of the loyal prelates' disappointment in any case that the auxiliary bishop of Vác, for instance, declared in familiar priestly circles that he felt like a second-class citizen because he could not leave for the Council. Although Norbert Legányi, the archabbot of Pannonhalma, did not number among the loyal prelates, he nevertheless received the news that the state would not consent to his travel with disappointment, perhaps because he had received an invitation to attend not only the Council but also the congress of Benedictine abbots in Rome. He greeted the ÁEH commissioner visiting him, László Bai, with the following words: "I thought

that you were bringing me a prepared passport.”⁷⁰ It is indicative of Legányi’s determination that he entrusted his fellow Benedictine living in Rome, Gellért Békés, with representing him at the Benedictine synod.⁷¹

Taking into account the power relations between the bishops and the state, it perhaps does not appear surprising, though the competent authorities in any case found it noteworthy that through late October not one prelate had protested at the ÁEH, or any other state agency, about the state’s denial of permission to attend the Council.⁷² Only in the case of Vendel Endrédy, the archabbot of Zirc, who was unauthorized to exercise his functions, do we know of such an intention. Having received not only an official invitation (only after quite some delay, on the day of the Council’s opening, October 11) but also a separate message from the pope instructing him to travel to Rome without fail, Endrédy wanted to attend at all costs. For this reason, he was not content with entrusting by telegram, even before the opening of the Council, his fellow Cistercian, Anzelm Nagy of Dallas, with representing him at the sessions, but wished to discuss the matter of his travel no one less than János Kádár. (His proxy had the right to attend only the plenary sessions.) In this regard László Bai, rapporteur for church affairs, replied to Endrédy that while it was the State Office for Church Affairs that dealt with the question of foreign travel, like every Hungarian citizen, naturally the abbot of Zirc also could request an audience from the prime minister.⁷³

Among Hungarian bishops the situation of Prince-Primate József Mindszenty was unique. It is unlikely that the Hungarian post would have delivered the invitations to the cardinal, who was residing in the American embassy. Although the Holy See did plan to use the Council as pretext to invite Mindszenty to Rome, it was unable to forward the invitation letter to him even via diplomatic means.⁷⁴ In any case, the Holy See’s intentions notwithstanding, as early as August 11 the Politburo had taken its position on the Mindszenty case, deciding that the cardinal could be released only after the Council.⁷⁵ The Hungarian cardinal nevertheless followed developments closely and gladly would have taken part in it. This is indicated not only by the fact that according to the intelligence of the Hungarian state security services (unverifiable based on our present state of knowledge) Mindszenty also had drafted recommendations for the Council,⁷⁶ but his own diary entries also attest to this. When the Hungarian papers published the names of the Hungarian council delegation, he recorded the following in his diary:

“The Hungarian bishops are going to Rome to attend the Council. *Heu me miserum, non licet ire mihi*. I would have an important role, I would have recommendations.”⁷⁷

3.1.3. Expectations for the Council

The morale reports of the Hungarian state organs dealing with church policy allow us to form a picture of how the announcement of the Council and the council preparations resonated among the lower clergy.⁷⁸ However, it cannot be overlooked that the picture outlined below is necessarily one-sided. It informs us in greater detail about those elements of the atmosphere surrounding the Council which for one reason or another were of interest to those directing church policy. Thus, concerning expectations for the substantive part of the Council, i.e., its teaching and results, we possess merely minimal information.

Prior to the Council broader Hungarian Catholic opinion perhaps dealt mostly with the question of whether the state would permit attendance and, if so, whom it would allow to travel abroad. In the first half of the summer it was still the general opinion that the Hungarian bishops were highly unlikely to travel to Rome;⁷⁹ however, beginning in July more and more people hoped that certain bishops might yet be allowed to attend.⁸⁰ From this time on guesses about the identity of the attendees became constant.⁸¹ In the end, the list of the names of the Hungarian council delegates published in September did not cause particular surprise. The priests deemed “reactionary” by the state, however, did not consider the selected persons qualified to represent the entire Hungarian Church and voiced their hope that the Vatican Secretariat would condemn the latter’s previous activities.⁸²

Like the bishops, the lower clergy also considered Hungarian attendance especially important in terms of church policy. According to the intelligence of the State Office for Church Affairs, the majority of the priesthood hoped that direct contacts would lead to a dissipation of the tension between the Hungarian government and the Holy See and perhaps also to the appointment of new bishops.⁸³ They were simultaneously optimistic that the council resolutions would not make the work of the priests living in the socialist countries more difficult. At the same time, amidst the basically optimistic

mood concerned voices within the ranks of the peace priest movement could also be heard: several feared that the bishops deliberating with the Holy See would be prepared, in the interest of consensus, to portray the peace priests' activities in a negative light. Priests who refused to cooperate with the state, on the other hand, considered it unlikely that the Hungarian delegation assembled by the government would dare to take steps that imperiled the *status quo* in Hungarian church policy. These priests, engaged for the most part in "illegal pastoral work," attacked those persons proclaiming the possibility of an agreement with the Communist regime and strove to exploit the expectations surrounding the council preparations in order to intensify religious life. Those in charge of Hungarian church policy went so far as to evaluate this as cooperation with "Protestant reactionary circles" in working to establish an anti-Communist united front in the spirit of ecumenism desired by the pope.⁸⁴

About opinions concerning the Council's teaching and likely results, our sources reveal that, unlike the bishops, Vatican II neither aroused particular interest among the faithful, nor did the priesthood expect much from it. A significant number of priests assumed a wait-and-see stance, trusting merely that the resolutions to be passed in the spirit of *aggiornamento* would facilitate pastoral work. Whereas Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely in his above-quoted meditation had touched upon virtually every future topic of the Council, Imre Olmos, parish priest of the Holy Cross Parish, for example, expected new provisions only in the regulation of the liturgy.⁸⁵

Notes

- ¹ Cf. Tomka, *Halálra szántak*, 163–64.
- ² Bögre, *Vallásosság és identitás*, 37.
- ³ The fact that in this regard the data of Mihály Endrey, auxiliary bishop of Eger, and that of the ÁEH coincide makes the accuracy of the estimate likely: Report on the situation of various churches and denominations. Budapest, December 20, 1962. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1963/7. ő. e. 3; and The opinion of Mihály Endrey, auxiliary bishop of Eger on the situation of the Church. Budapest, September 16, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0037/1963.
- ⁴ There is no doubt that the destruction of village communities, and thereby the formation of an easily manipulated society cut off from its roots and support and incapable of offering resistance to the regime was an explicit social aim of the state policy pushing for collectivization. Indirectly, therefore, violent socio-political process the suppression of religion was also thereby achieved.
- ⁵ In addition to the societal processes it was undoubtedly the inimical state church policy that caused the steep erosion of religious education. According to the data of the ÁEH, the temporary upswing following the 1956 Revolution (the number of participants in religious education in schools was 46.76% in the 1957–58 school year) was followed by a steady, sharp decline (a mere 19.3% attendance in school religious education in 1961–62). Even though the ÁEH also noted that this decline did not fully reflect the true situation (because parallel to the decline participation in catechesis on church premises grew—albeit not at an equal rate), the gradual decline is indisputable. This is indicated, for instance, by the declining demand for textbooks, which the records of the meetings of the Bench of Bishops reveal. Report on the situation of various churches and denominations. Budapest, December 20, 1962. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1963/7. ő. e. 7; and Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on September 11, 1962. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1109.
- ⁶ Cf. Kálmán, *Dokumentumok*, 56–62.

- ⁷ In 1962 the ÁEH registered 5,400 secular priests. Annex to the report on the situation of various churches and denominations. Budapest, December 20, 1962. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1963/7. ő. e. 13.
- ⁸ According to the IM's estimate in 1960 25–30% of priests still belonged to the “reactionary” category. Cf. Report on evolution of the state-Church relations. Budapest, February 25, 1960. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 5. cs. 172. ő. e. 66.
- ⁹ Cf. Máté-Tóth, “II. Vatikáni Zsinat,” 9–11.
- ¹⁰ One such great wave of arrests and trials took place during the Council's preparatory phase, in 1960–1961. Cf. Lénárd, “Koncentrált támadás,” I–IV; Szabó, “Magyarország és a Vatikán,” 76–79.
- ¹¹ On November 20, 1950 Pius XII appointed the Canons Mihály Endrey of Vác and János Bárd of Kalocsa second auxiliary bishop of Eger and auxiliary bishop of Kalocsa respectively, while on March 11, 1951 he named the parish priests Imre Szabó of Budapest-Krisztinaváros and Imre Kisberk of Székesfehérvár inner-town auxiliary bishops of Esztergom and Székesfehérvár respectively. The newly appointed auxiliary bishops were soon duly consecrated; however, the state did not agree to allow János Bárd to carry out his functions at all, and also withheld permission to function from the other bishops for varying lengths of time. Cf. Salacz, *Magyar Katolikus*, 175; Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 35–36; Mózyessy, “1956-ot követő megtorlás,” 125; Fejérdy, “Strategie,” 104–13.
- ¹² It was in this period, on May 3, 1960 that Endre Kriston also passed away in Eger; as an auxiliary bishop, however, his death did not alter the composition of the ordinaries.
- ¹³ Cf. Memorandum for Gyula Kállai. Budapest, August 21, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0022–10/1962.
- ¹⁴ Regarding how the members of the episcopate perceived state-Church relations, see: Kálmán, *Dokumentumok*, 13–15.
- ¹⁵ Cf. *Ibid.*, 69–72.
- ¹⁶ At least the episcopal conference complained in these words in 1959. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 981.
- ¹⁷ Fejérdy, “Aux origines,” 389–95.
- ¹⁸ Summary report on the relation between the Bench of Bishops and the Vatican. Budapest, March 20, 1959. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–13 405/3–a. “Magyar Római Katolikus Püspöki Kar,” 266.
- ¹⁹ In 1961, the Holy Office, for example, did not approve that Hamvas would be appointed member of any Pontifical Commission of the Second Vatican Council. Angelo dell'Acqua to Pericle Felici. November 9, 1961. ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 319, fasc. 5.

- ²⁰ Indicating this, for example, is a sentence in the letter sent to the minister to Rome: “Apart from one Catholic bishop the invitees do not really want to travel, even Archbishop Grósz is planning the journey ‘for an unforeseeable distant time,’ citing the state of his health.” János Horváth, chairman of the ÁEH to Gyula Simó, Hungarian ambassador in Rome. Budapest, April 14, 1959. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0010-4/1959.
- ²¹ From Károly Olt’s memorandum to István Köteles we know that József Grósz, Endre Hamvas, Kálmán Papp, and Miklós Dudás all received invitations: Memorandum of Károly Olt, chairman of the ÁEH for István Köteles. Budapest, September 9, 1959. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0037-2/1959. 15. Apart from those listed, an invitation arrived for Lajos Shvoy as well, as his reply letter reveals: *Acta et documenta. Series I, Vol. II, Pars II*, 521.
- ²² We have no information about whether Bishop Miklós Dudás took any steps to reply to the Council Preparatory Commission’s letter. In any case, according to the remark written in pen on the copy of Cardinal Tardini’s letter found in the documents of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda Miklós Dudás “declared: he does not wish to reply.” MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1959/4. ő. e. 263. The content of the declaration—like József Grósz’s uninterested reaction quoted above—need not be taken necessarily seriously.
- ²³ Seeming to contradict this is that according to the memorandum of Gyula Szakács, chief rapporteur on church affairs, Archbishop Grósz did not show particular interest in the Council Preparatory Commission’s request at the time of the document’s arrival. However, we most likely should regard the seeming lack of interest rather as a “diversionary campaign”: by trivializing the weight of the question Grósz perhaps wanted to ensure that no obstacles would be erected to sending out the recommendations drafted later. Handwritten note of Gyula Szakács chief rapporteur on church affairs on the verso of Tardini’s letter. Undated. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-28-2/1959. 2. According to the memorandum, Grósz commented on the letter thus: “It has no particular importance. There is still so much uncertainty around the entire matter of the Council that we may even witness some surprises.” But asked whether the Bench of Bishops would have any recommendations for the Council, he replied thus: “Hardly any; though one never knows whether our clever minds will come up with something new, which we will forward in the proper manner.” Ultimately, however, Grósz’s tactics had precisely the opposite effect. When Károly Olt prohibited the recommendations from being sent to Rome, in addition to the inadequacy of the contents of the documents—alluding precisely to Grósz’s utterance—he pointed out that the “Bench of Bishops does not display a particular willingness to send the recommendations either.” Handwritten memorandum of Károly Olt, chairman of the ÁEH. September 17, 1959. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-28-2/1959. 17.

- ²⁴ Endre Hamvas to Card. Domenico Tardini, Szeged, July 27, 1959. ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 259, fasc. 8.
- ²⁵ While Grósz's and Papp's recommendations for the Council came into the possession of the ÁEH prior to September 9, the ÁEH headquarters received Endre Hamvas's draft reply from János Rátkai, chief rapporteur on church affairs, only on September 23. Cf. Memorandum of Károly Olt, chairman of the ÁEH for István Köteles. Budapest, September 9, 1959. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0037-2/1959. 15., as well as János Rátkai, chief rapporteur on church affairs to László Csala. Undated. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-28-2/c/1959. 8. Kálmán Papp's and Endre Hamvas's replies as well as the drafts of the three parish priests can all be found: MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-28-2/1959. 7. 10–16.
- ²⁶ Lajos Shvoy to Card. Domenico Tardini, Székesfehérvár, September 3, 1959. ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 271, fasc. 2, published in: *Acta et documenta. Series I, Vol. II, Pars II*, 521. From one report of the agent codenamed "Aspiráns" (identical to the person later reporting under the codename "Doktor") we know that Lajos Shvoy asked his priests Gyula Molnár and László Németh to work out suggestions for the Ecumenical Council. Undated report of agent "Aspiráns." ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-13 581/3. "Áruló," 176.
- ²⁷ The *vota* of Bishops Imre Kisberk and Lajos Shvoy can be found in Hungarian translation: Report on the documents send to the Second Vatican Council by the leaders of the diocese of Székesfehérvár. Budapest, June 25, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 161–65. For the proposal Shvoy sent to Rome in the original Latin, see: *Acta et documenta. Series I, Vol. II, Pars II*, 521–23.
- ²⁸ *History of Vatican II*, Vol I, 103.
- ²⁹ Cardinal Tardini's letter explicitly asked that the recommendations be sent in Latin, thus it may be assumed that the Hungarian bishops' replies without exception were also written in Latin. At present, however, the original Latin text is known only in the case of Archbishop Grósz's and Bishop Shvoy's *vota*, while the other drafts and replies are available in Hungarian translation.
- ³⁰ *History of Vatican II*, Vol I, 112–17.
- ³¹ Memorandum of Károly Olt, chairman of the ÁEH for István Köteles. Budapest, September 9, 1959. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0037-2/1959. 15.
- ³² Handwritten comment on the margin of Károly Olt's memorandum to István Köteles: "in the soc. countries there is a neg. opinion of the Vatican, let them make a pos. suggestion." The handwriting is perhaps Olt's. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0037-2/1959. 15.
- ³³ On July 31 Olt attached the following remark to Tardini's letter: "To this summons no substantive response of any kind must be given (neither against it nor for it)."

- Handwritten comment of Károly Olt at the bottom of the invitation letter directed to the bishops. July 31, 1959. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-28-2/1959. 1.
- ³⁴ Handwritten memorandum of Károly Olt, chairman of the ÁEH. September 17, 1959. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-28-2/1959. 17.
- ³⁵ The date can be learned from Bishop Lajos Shvoy's reply; see *Acta et documenta. Series I*, Vol. II, *Pars II*, 521.
- ³⁶ To uncover the contacts of the bishop of Székesfehérvár, considered dangerous by the regime—relying on information obtained from the reports of the agent codenamed “Doktor” living in the episcopal residence and other sources—the state security organs made serious efforts. A significant portion of the documentation relating to this can be found in the object dossiers “Canale” opened on October 16, 1961 to uncover the Hungarian Church's foreign (primarily Vatican) contacts and collect incriminating data. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/1-10. “Canale.” On the investigation into Hildegard Steiger's case, codenamed “Turista,” see: Summary report on the year 1961. Budapest, November 29, 1961. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/1. “Canale,” 313. However, according to another report, it appears instead that Shvoy got the recommendation out of the country through Walter Körbler, a doctor from Bodajk: “[...] we will use the fact—now known in the episcopal residence in Székesfehérvár as well—that the police are aware that Walter Körbler, a doctor from Bodajk, illegally got a letter out to István Mester in Rome from Shvoy and Imre Kisberk.” Operative plan regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 6, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 245–49.
- ³⁷ On the back of the letter of Shvoy there is the notice from the Pontifical Hungarian Institute in Rome: “La lettera è stata spedita della Germania per evitare la censura del regime.” ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 271, fasc. 2.
- ³⁸ The letter of Shvoy reached the Preparatory commission of the Council on September 26, 1959. ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 271, fasc. 2. The informational report of the Interior Ministry's Division III/I, dated September 8, 1962, must be judged completely erroneous. This named 31 Hungarian ecclesiastics (with the exceptions of Endre Hamvas, Sándor Kovács, and József Mindszenty none of them bishops) as ones from whom a recommendation reached the Council's Preparatory Commission. In any case, the report also requested verification of the information, which came from a “reliable” source. Information report. Budapest, September 8, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/3. “Canale,” 62–63.
- ³⁹ Report on the documents send to the Second Vatican Council by the leaders of the Diocese of Székesfehérvár. Budapest, June 25, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 161–65.
- ⁴⁰ Draft on the policy to adopt regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-8/1962. 2.

- ⁴¹ The Second Vatican Council: reflections of Sándor Kovács. Szombathely, February 26, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. Sz-19-3/1962. See also: Rétfalvi, “Kovács Sándor szombathelyi püspök,” 32–33.
- ⁴² Most likely this referred to Pope John XXIII’s February 2, 1962 *motu proprio*, which includes the following sentence: “facere non possumus, quin universos filios Nostros iterum incitemus usque Deo admovendas preces, ut hic eventus prospere cedat, in quem intenti sumus, una cum Nostris venerabilibus Fratribus ac dilectis Filiis, [...] simulque cum universo clero populoque christiano.” “Motu Proprio Consilium” (February 2, 1962), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 54 (1962): 65–66.
- ⁴³ Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on 13, 1962. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1093.
- ⁴⁴ Draft on the policy to adopt regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-8/1962. 2.
- ⁴⁵ Cf. Fejérdy, “Szocialista tömb,” 214, note 12.
- ⁴⁶ On Endre Hamvas, bishop of Csanád. Budapest, March 2, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0030-1/1962.
- ⁴⁷ Endre Hamvas, bishop of Csanád to József Prantner, chairman of the ÁEH. Szeged, May 24, 1962; József Prantner to Deputy Prime Minister Gyula Kállai. Budapest, May 29, 1962; Endre Hamvas to Card. Gustavo Testa. Szeged, June 2, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-9/1962., ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 333, fasc. 10.
- ⁴⁸ István Mester forwarded the invitations to the Hungarian bishops on June 25, 1962; The copy of the invitation received by Sándor Kovács, bishop of Szombathely and his letter to József Prantner, chairman of the ÁEH. Szombathely, July 2, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-4/1962. This is supported moreover by the fact that the summary sent by the IM to the ÁEH on June 26, 1962 still reports only the arrival of the invitation to Hamvas. Information report on the Vatican’s policy and the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 26, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-7/1962.
- ⁴⁹ Memorandum for Gyula Kállai. Budapest, August 8, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-12/1962. Naturally, the state security organs were the first to learn of the arrival of the new invitations. To the operative officer’s question whether the letters should be delivered to the addressees, permission was granted on July 3. Cf. Report on the invitations to the Hungarian bishops. Budapest, June 30, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 171. In Czechoslovakia, where the situation was similar, the delivery of the invitations was not a foregone conclusion either. Cf. Hal’ko, “Comunisti slovacchi,” 167–69.
- ⁵⁰ Sándor Kovács, bishop of Szombathely to József Prantner, chairman of the ÁEH. Szombathely, July 2, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-4/1962; Miklós Dudás, bishop of Hajdúdorog to András Madai ÁEH officer. Nyíregyháza, July 7, 1962.

- MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-3/1962; Report of agent "Doktor." July 5, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-13 581/3. "Áruló," 306; Imre Kisberk, auxiliary bishop of Székesfehérvár to József Prantner. Székesfehérvár, July 14, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-5/1962; Norbert Legányi, archabbot of Pannonhalma to József Prantner. August 13, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-7/1962; Vince Kovács, auxiliary bishop of Vác to József Prantner. Vác, August 9, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-2/1962.
- ⁵¹ Cf. Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár to Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád. July 21, 1962, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 56.
- ⁵² Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. August 28, 1962, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 60.
- ⁵³ Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár to Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád. July 21, 1962, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 56.
- ⁵⁴ Report on the letter of Lajos Shvoy to Endre Hamvas Budapest, July 24, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 238-39; Proposal of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on the invitation of the Hungarian bishops to the Second Vatican Council. August 1, 1962, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 64-65; Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on September 11, 1962. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1109.
- ⁵⁵ The answer of Endre Hamvas to Lajos Shvoy. August 18, 1962, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 59.
- ⁵⁶ Information report on the Council. September 11, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-13 581/3. "Áruló," 323-327.
- ⁵⁷ Handwritten letter of Auxiliary Bishop Imre Szabó of Esztergom. September 22, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-8/1962.
- ⁵⁸ The Council's Central Preparatory Commission's letter, signed by Card. Gustavo Testa and Secretary Pericle Felici. Vatican State, January 2, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/1962. The copy sent to Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár is published in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 55.
- ⁵⁹ Accompanying letter of István Mester, Representative of the Hungarian Bench of Bishops in Rome, to the papal bull. Rome, June 25, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/1962.
- ⁶⁰ Bishop Kálmán Papp of Győr to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Győr, August 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/1962.
- ⁶¹ Endre Hamvas to Card. Gustavo Testa. Szeged, August 24, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 173. A photocopy of the letter: ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 660, fasc. 4.
- ⁶² Endre Hamvas to István Mester. Debrecen, August 28, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 174.

- ⁶³ Hamvas's letter arrived in Rome on September 7. Cf. István Mester to József Zágon. Rome, September 8, 1962. SZIA–Zágon. 18/1. See also: ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 660, fasc. 4.
- ⁶⁴ After such antecedents it may be regarded as a concession on the Holy See's part that on September 28, 1962 the pope appointed the Apostolic Administrators Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer of Esztergom, Pál Brezanóczy of Eger and Sándor Klempa of Veszprém as council experts (*periti*), thus guaranteeing the possibility of their participation in the Council. "Diarium Romanae Curiae," *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 54 (1962): 782–83. The connection between this appointments and the Hungarian governments' request conveyed by Hamvas is clear from the Pro memoria of the Secretariat of State, September 12, 1962. ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 660. fasc. 4.
- ⁶⁵ "The invitation for 'Kékes' has not arrived yet, thus the State Office for Church Affairs on the basis of Paragraph 224 of the Ecclesiastical Law Code [Code of Canon Law] wishes to send him out to the Second Vatican Council with other—not yet determined—diocesan bishops as procurator with full rights." Operative plan regarding the Second Vatican Council. September 7, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. "Canale," 254–56.
- ⁶⁶ Mandatory letter of Bishop Kálmán Papp of Győr for Apostolic Administrator Pál Brezanóczy of Eger. Győr, September 15, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. V–37–10/1962; and Memorandum for Gyula Kállai. Budapest, September 14, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0022–10/a/1962.
- ⁶⁷ ÁEH Chairman József Prantner to Bishop Kálmán Papp of Győr. Budapest, September 14, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. V–37–10/1962.; Bishop Kálmán Papp of Győr to Pope John XXIII. Győr, September 20, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. V–37–12/e/1962. The same letter: ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 659, fasc. 1.
- ⁶⁸ Memorandum on the negotiations with the bishops. Budapest, September 19, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. V–37–12/b/1962; Information on the meetings with the church leaders invited to the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, October 23, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0022–19/b/1962; Report of the III/III–1 Section of the Police Headquarters of Borsod County on Bertalan Badalik. Miskolc, October 4, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–12 547/6. Badalik Bertalan. 90; Memorandum on the negotiations with Bishop Endrey. Budapest, September 19, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. V–37–12/b/1962.
- ⁶⁹ Memorandum on the field-day of September 13. Budapest, September 14, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. H–31–1/a/1962; Information on the meetings with the church leaders invited to the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, October 23, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0022–19/b/1962; Bishop Imre Kisberk and his companions on the church policy and the Council. Budapest, December 29, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–13 581/3. "Áruló," 356–60.

- ⁷⁰ Information on the meetings with the church leaders invited to the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, October 23, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-19/b/1962; Morale report dealing with the Council. Budapest, September 19, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 267-68.
- ⁷¹ Memorandum on the field-day of September 13. Budapest, September 14, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. H-31-1/a/1962. On the Benedictine synod, see Somorjai, *Bencés Konföderáció*, 185-88, 351-52.
- ⁷² Information on the meetings with the church leaders invited to the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, October 23, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-19/b/1962.
- ⁷³ Memorandum. Budapest, November 1, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-20/1962.
- ⁷⁴ Somorjai, *Sancta Sedes II*, 46.
- ⁷⁵ Proposal for the Politburo on the American-Hungarian relations and the situation of József Mindszenty. August 10, 1962, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 57-58; and Minutes of the Politburo's session on August 11, 1962. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 275. ő. e. 2.
- ⁷⁶ Summary report on the conclusion of the preparation of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, September 17, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 261.
- ⁷⁷ Mindszenty, *Napi jegyzetek*, 284. The translation of the Latin sentence: "Alas, poor me, I am not allowed to go." The interest apparent from the contemporary *Napi jegyzetek* ("Daily Notes") is contradicted by Cardinal König's recollections. Recalling their meeting on April 18, 1963 the archbishop of Vienna speaks of Mindszenty having displayed an almost complete lack of interest in the Council. Cf. Del Rio and Giacomelli, *San Pietro e il Cremlino*, 84-85.
- ⁷⁸ According to the available memoranda the announcements and preparations for the Council did not arouse major interest among believers, which the State Office for Church Affairs explained by stating that "the faithful know that the Council will not have a direct impact and influence on their lives." Draft on the policy to adopt regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-8/1962.
- ⁷⁹ Report on the Vatican policy and the Ecumenical Council, Budapest, June 26, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-7/1962.
- ⁸⁰ Draft on the policy to adopt regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-8/1962.
- ⁸¹ E.g., Report on the opinions about the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, September 26, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. 37-12/a/1962.
- ⁸² Report on the experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 6, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 138-50.

- ⁸³ According to well-informed persons the Hungarian government had wished to settle the Mindszenty affair already prior to the Council. Within the bishops' entourage and among leading church figures several hoped that after certain rehabilitative measures Mindszenty would be allowed to attend. According to the voiced opinions, a settlement of the affair would greatly help the Hungarian Church. Morale report dealing with the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, September 19, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. "Canale," 267–68.
- ⁸⁴ Draft on the policy to adopt regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0022–8/1962; Information on the morale in the Győr-Sopron County vis-à-vis the Council. Győr, October 5, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. V–37–12/e/1962; Memorandum on the opinions of Roman Catholics about the luncheon given by Kállai. Budapest, September 26, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. V–37–12/c/1962; The Vatican policy and the preparation of the Ecumenical Council. Undated. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. "Canale," 400–414; Morale report dealing with the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, September 19, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. "Canale," 267–268; Report on the experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 6, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. "Canale," 138–50; Information report on the Vatican's policy and the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 26, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0022–7/1962.
- ⁸⁵ Report on the opinions about the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, September 26, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. 37–12/a/1962; Report on the experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 6, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. "Canale," 138–50; Draft on the policy to adopt regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0022–8/1962.

PART II.

HUNGARY AND THE HOLY SEE
DURING THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL
(1962-1965)

1.

The Holy See: Council and *Ostpolitik*

1.1. THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL AND THE CATHOLIC CHURCH: *ECCLESIA AD INTRA*

John XXIII had a definite notion of the tasks the Council must address. However, he had not given his colleagues specific guidance, nor had he intervened in the preparatory work. Moving forward, Pope Paul VI, who himself considered it important for the Council to expound its doctrine organically while building around a central theme, in line with a proposal by Cardinal Archbishop Léon-Joseph Suenens of Mechelen-Brussels formulated the tasks of the Council in the following manner: first, articulate the Church's self-definition and carry out its internal renewal; second, restore the unity of the Church through dialogue with the separated brethren; and third, initiate dialogue between the Church and the modern world.¹

Realizing the papal expectations for the tasks of the Council depended to a significant degree on the positions of the council fathers and the balance of power between the emerging factions. Naturally the members of the approximately 2,500-person assembly held divergent views on many questions. In general terms, it may be stated that from the first session a minority and a majority position crystalized around the key issues defining the Council's pastoral character. At the same time, it must not be overlooked either that behind the two main factions smaller alignments, frequently overlapping one another, also materialized; on specific issues these would side sometimes with one of the major factions, sometimes with the other.²

The proportions and strength of the two main currents comprising the various groups cannot be determined precisely. Such efforts are rendered difficult by, among other things, the Council's dynamic nature: thanks to Paul VI's clarifying and mediating role, beginning with the second session the positions of numerous bishops underwent considerable change. Based on the various votes we can in any case gain some picture of the power

relations. It may be stated in general that the obvious majority was formed by those council fathers who supported reforms, defended the autonomy of the bishops and were open to the modern world. The opposition to the “progressive” faction, whose main strength was provided by the *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*, barely exceeded 10 percent of the council fathers. While at the vote on the question of freedom of religion held on November 27, 1965, 254 voted no as opposed to 1,979 voting yes; the number of opposing votes eventually fell to 70 against 2,308 votes in favor. A similar trend may be observed in the case of the document *Lumen Gentium*, which following fierce debates the Council adopted by an enormous majority. In summary, it may be stated that the percentage of contrary votes rose higher than 10 percent on questions of lesser importance (e.g., adoption of the document on the means of social communication) or in particularly tense situations only temporarily (on November 25, 1963 this proportion approached even 30%), though antagonisms were lessened by clarification of the issues and the texts.³

Contemporaries saw primarily the negative side of the conflicts between majority and minority. The disputes—especially under Paul VI, who strove to reduce conflicts—slowed and hindered the work of the Council and also pushed the constant dialogue with society to the background. At the same time the debates, characteristic of all councils in church history, had a positive impact as well: by helping to clarify several problems, avoid extremist positions and prevent insufficiently mature texts from gaining acceptance. Playing an important role in this clarification process was the pope himself, who strove (even though the majority by its numerical size would have ensured the victory of the drafted documents) to convince the opposition rather than defeat it. Therefore preserving the freedom of the council work, the pope did everything to ensure that on each question the broadest possible consensus came into being, even if this meant the doctrine being debated was not made fully clear in every respect. By seeking consensus in this way the pontiff managed to ensure that in the end a sweeping majority of the council fathers voted to approve even the most debated documents.⁴

In the pastoral spirit desired by John XXIII, as well as Paul VI's address opening the second session, the central theme was the Church. The direction of the internal (spiritual and institutional) renewal depended on how the Church defined its own essence. For this reason, the debates between the two main factions precisely from the fact that the differing theological outlooks

held by the “progressives” and the “conservatives” resulted in quite different images of the Church.⁵ From this it is thus understandable that the debates around the draft constitution on the Church dragged for the duration of the Council.

Vatican II's constitution *Lumen Gentium* ultimately called the Church a mystery of faith that was impossible to grasp with a single concept. Instead it can be best approached with the help of mutually adjusting and complementary images and concepts (LG 6–7). The new image of the Church elaborated during the ecclesiological shift, refashioned with the aid of the central concepts of the “People of God,” the “Mystical Body of Christ” and the “fundamental sacrament,” nevertheless attested unequivocally to a revival of the understanding of the primitive Church as *communio* and *sacramentum*.⁶ And the placement of the image of the Church embodying the mystery of salvation in the center allowed clericalism, triumphalism and juridicalism, often predominating as a consequence of the hierarchical-legalistic attitude, to be successfully overcome.

The novel, pastoral-based approach to the questions and the call for *aggiornamento* naturally brought with them a rethinking of not only the concept of the Church but its organization as well. The dialogue concerning this was focussed around debates on two closely connected issues: the centralization of the Church, and the role and meaning of papal primacy. Whereas the centralization issue concentrated more on the relationship of the bishops and the Curia, the church-law aspects of the issue (the problems of authority and competence), the issue of papal primacy, apart from the legal relationship of the pope and the bishops, centered on a clarification of their theological relationship.

After lengthy debates, the needed completion of the First Vatican Council was finally achieved at the Second Vatican Council. Whereas the first Council, interrupted by war in 1870, had focused on the role of the pope, the latest Ecumenical Council expounded the doctrine on bishops, declaring them to be the necessary and irreplaceable supports of the pope. As opposed to the belief of the prior centuries, which vacillated between two extremes (Gallicanism and episcopalism on the one hand, ultramontanism on the other), an outlook balanced by an elaboration of the theology of the episcopate emerged. At the same time, Vatican II, by linking together the *ordo episcoporum* and collegiality, not only supplemented the previous

hierarchical image of the Church and illuminated the doctrine of papal infallibility more clearly but, in contrast to previous centralization, also highlighted the importance of the local churches led by the bishops. And finally, it laid the foundations for the subsequent framework needed the bishops to functioning collegially (Synod of Bishops, conferences of bishops, etc.).⁷

1.2. THE COUNCIL AND HUMANKIND: *ECCLESIA AD EXTRA*

The pastoral and ecumenical spirit of *aggiornamento* proclaimed by John XXIII was fully embraced by Paul VI as well.⁸ In fact, by articulating the Council's planned program he made it more concrete and—in a certain sense—more wide-reaching. In his address opening the second session he not only called the restoration of Christian unity the task of the Council but also raised the necessity of dialogue with the other denominations and the modern world. Thus, in keeping with Paul VI's intent, in the end not only was a separate resolution on the relationship between the Christian churches and denominations adopted, but separate documents were also drafted on interfaith dialogue and the Church's relationship to society.

This opening of the Church *ad extra* necessitated a novel methodological approach in theology, in the elaboration of which the Secretariat for Christian Unity played a preeminent role. Whereas previously theology had approached problems primarily from the theoretical side, based on abstract metaphysical basic principles, the Council's ecumenical-pastoral outlook made it necessary to take practical life, the specific historical situation, increasingly into account. The Council's doctrine thereby successfully complemented the traditional deductive method with the inductive method that brought awareness to the historical dimension of humanity and the Church. At the same time, as an outgrowth of the pastoral outlook sensitive to the "signs of the times" the negative historical view of the centuries preceding the Second Vatican Council also changed: the Church now no longer stood against the rapidly changing society of the modern age as a "besieged castle,"⁹ but rather as a historical being "on its pilgrim way" (LG) together with humanity.¹⁰

Vatican II's declaration on the freedom of religion is the document in which the above described shift in theological model can be seen most clearly.

It comes as no surprise therefore, that it was this text, which brought about important innovation vis-à-vis the official Catholic teaching of the earlier era, that elicited the fiercest debates (and thus experienced one of the most vicissitudinous fates). The lengthy and often heated debates were not in vain, however, since the objections prompted the defenders of the declaration to define concepts more precisely and ground arguments more deeply, and thus contributed to the adoption of a more balanced document at the end of the Council. In *Dignitatis Humanae*, the Catholic Church, too, now acknowledged that freedom of religion was a human right which was the individual subjective right of every person and religious community and was grounded in the ever more widely recognized and acknowledged dignity of the human person. At the same time, the document emphasizes man's obligation to seek the truth. It accepts, however, that this search must be free and devoid of any compulsion. Only the protection of the rights of others and the public order sets limits to this freedom. Nevertheless, the state authority is "neither authorized nor obligated to follow or favor any determined religion"; its task is merely "to stand guard over the preservation of the human right of religious freedom, create favorable conditions for the practice of people's religious life, and protect the common good and public morality against the violations of those abusing freedom of religion."¹¹ However, the historical, philosophical and theological arguments of *Dignitatis Humanae* not only provide a balanced teaching on the relationship of the religious person, the Church and other religious communities to modern state and society, but the fundamental principles it discusses also guarantee the preconditions for ecumenical and interdenominational relations.¹²

In the debate on the question of the unity of Christians, closely tied to the problem of freedom of religion, it was likewise the aforementioned two mentalities that opposed each other. Adherents of the old outlook, originating with the Counter Reformation, conceived of Christian unity as the return of other Christians to the Catholic Church. The other side, while continuing to highlight the unique nature of the Catholic Church, took as its starting point the necessity of jointly bearing witness and emphasized the importance of a return to common evangelical foundations.¹³

In the end, the document that was adopted, like the declaration on religious freedom, represented an important step in opening the Church to

the outside world and placed interdenominational dialogue on new foundations. The chief innovation of *Unitatis Redintegratio* is that, instead of the old image of unity based on uniformism and unionism, it outlines a model of unity based on the mutually complementary multiplicity of differing charisms and traditions. On the question of many churches or a single church—in harmony with other conciliar documents—while the resolution maintains that the means of salvation exist in their entirety only in the Catholic Church, it at once acknowledges that all of the constituent elements of the Church founded by Christ can be realized in the other churches as well. The principle of a hierarchy of truths elaborated in the document (UR 11), according to which the truths of Christian revelation display degrees of difference according to their distance from the core of revelation, at the same time opened positive perspectives to further theological reflection and dialogue with the other Christian churches.¹⁴

The third conciliar document to follow from the Church's turn towards the outside world, *Nostra Aetate*, which originally was to have dealt only with the relationship to the Jewish people, enumerates the values of each religion in a perspective of universal salvation history encompassing the whole human history. These it attributes ultimately to the influence of the Holy Spirit, but at the same time it also emphasizes the distinguishing significance of revelation when it points out that the fullness of religious life is to be found in Christ (NA 2). Thanks largely to political tacticts the draft text, whiche started out as a stance against anti-Semitism and a reflection on the Church's Old Testament roots, was opened up to include the other world religions as well and in the end became the first ecclesiastical document on interfaith dialogue.¹⁵

Finally, it was the salient task of the pastoral Council to review the relationship between the Church and the society of the modern age. While the declarations on freedom of religion and interfaith dialogue had also pointed in this direction, *Gaudium et Spes* no longer concentrated on spiritual values present outside the Church, but sought instead to survey the relationship of the Church to the profane world. The Council also underscored the importance of the question by elevating the document to the rank of "constitution": along with the constitutions dealing with the inner life of the Church, *Gaudium et Spes* thereby became one of the four highest-ranking

documents defining the doctrines of the Vatican II while ensuring the balance between the Council's two dimensions (*Ecclesia ad intra—Ecclesia ad extra*).¹⁶

In addition to the debates stemming primarily from the various perspectives on the text's first, theoretical part of the various subjects discussed in the second half of the document in three cases (concerning Christian marriage, the condemnation of Communism, and war and peace) particularly fierce disagreements erupted that would endure until the last moment.¹⁷ From the point of view of the present topic it is these last two that warrant attention.

Despite the fact that many urged a condemnation of Communism from the outset, under the impact of John XXIII's opening address to the Council¹⁸ the early drafts of the document discussing the relationship of the Church and the modern world, dispensed with even a general condemnation of atheism.¹⁹ At a later session of the commission drafting the document—from the fall of 1964 on—although the question of Communism figures once again among the scheduled topics of the text, significant differences appearing in the approach to the problem further hindered the final wording. In the end, a compromise solution was reached. Because it would have been problematic, despite of the Council's pastoral nature, if Communism were not condemned even in such an indirect manner (since this would have suggested that the Church's teaching on this had changed),²⁰ while at the same time the appearance that the Church wanted to interfere in political matters also had to be avoided, the Council, without specifically mentioning Communism in the text, in the section on atheism resolutely repeated its previous condemnatory stance on "atheist regimes." The footnote inserted under the pressure of a significant minority of the council fathers at the same time made it unequivocal that in connection with atheist regimes it is first and foremost Communism that is being discussed: among previous condemnatory ecclesiastical declarations, the text cites first and foremost Pius XI's encyclical *Divini Redemptoris*, the central theme of which was a critique of Communism. In addition to omitting to mention Communism by name, the language of the document simultaneously reflected the Council's more open attitude: instead of the harsher verb *condamnat* (condemn) used earlier, the final wording features the less strident *reprobat* (reprove, disapprove, reject).

Likewise, because of its political aspects, the subject of war and peace was considered sensitive. That peace must be preserved, all of the council fathers agreed. Opinions varied, however, about how to achieve this. The issue remained in dispute until the last moment and the drafts, continuously amended based on the recommendations, constantly wavered between two positions. One of these, in addition to a general condemnation of war, also wanted to take specific situations into account, while the other urged a more radical, prophetic condemnation. Although the final text writes about the question of war in terms more nuanced than previously, and the quotation taken from *Pacem in Terris*, radically condemning war, was also moved to a footnote, some American bishops still did not find the text acceptable. However, moved by the declarations by Bishop Joseph Schöffner of Eichstätt and Archbishop Gabriel-Marie Garonne of Toulouse, in which they pointed out that the American bishops' concerns were unfounded, Cardinals Francis Spellman and Lawrence Joseph Shehan, who opposed the document the most, also pressed for adoption of the text. Thus, although a still significant number of council fathers (483) rejected the paragraphs on war, at the final vote the text as a whole received a sweeping majority.²¹

Thanks to multiple revisions, the constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, adopted on December 7, 1965, was undoubtedly a greatly improved, though imperfect document. This was largely a consequence of the novelty of the subject and the richness of the details it discussed (the latter had led its critics already during the Council, to dub it "Noah's Ark"²²). Fundamentally optimistic in tone, the constitution, which in its first part interprets the relationship between the Church and the world in light of Christian anthropology and the theology of the world while expounding the Catholic position on specific topics in its second part, nonetheless brought the era of excommunicatory condemnations and mistrust of the world to a close, and laid out the fundamental principles of that open attitude that created the possibility of engaging in mutual dialogue and learning from one another.²³

1.3. VATICAN OSTPOLITIK AT THE TIME OF THE COUNCIL

1.3.1. *The theoretical bases of the emerging eastern policy*

Pope John XXIII's eastward-oriented feelers, initiated simultaneously with the announcement the Second Vatican Council, by the start of the Council had brought about the first results. The positive experiences and above all the fact that—at almost the last minute—he managed to secure at least the partial attendance at the Council of the bishops from behind the Iron Curtain, confirmed the pope in his belief that the Holy See's main goals (improving the situation of the persecuted churches and promoting ecumenical dialogue) could be achieved through dialogue with the Communist regime, thought to be enduring.

While this new Vatican eastern policy, with its willingness to engage in dialogue, had been taking shape for years, its theoretical principles were first formulated only quite late, in John XXIII's last encyclical, *Pacem in Terris*, particularly significant from the point of view of the Council's position on the modern world and Communism as well. The document, published on April 11, 1963 and, in a novel way, addressed to all men of good will, spoke of Communism in discussing the conditions for the internal peace of states and peaceful coexistence among the various countries and peoples. The papal encyclical, which continued to emphasize the falsity of all worldviews that rejected the existence of God (which guaranteed absolute values and order) and man's dependence on Him, outlined the proper social order based on acceptance of God, and also offered a veiled critique of all dictatorial regimes by emphasizing human rights, formulated three essential basic principles of the Holy See's eastern policy.

With the inductive, pastoral outlook characteristic of him, John XXIII approached the relationship between Communism and the Church from the perspective of common human dignity, a characteristic shared by all people. On this basis he emphasized as the first basic principle the need to distinguish between the erroneous theory to be condemned and the persons professing the given theory: "it is always perfectly justifiable to distinguish between error as such and the person who falls into error. [...] A man who has fallen into error does not cease to be a man. He never forfeits his personal dignity; and that is something that must always be taken into

account. Besides, there exists in man's very nature an undying capacity to break through the barriers of error and seek the road to truth."²⁴

The second essential distinction featured in the encyclical concerned false philosophical teachings on the "nature, origin and purpose of men and the world," as well as historical movements demanding economic, social, cultural and political aims originating from these philosophical teachings. As opposed to the immutability of philosophical-ideological systems once elaborated, John XXIII emphasized in the case of institutions established on the basis of ideology but living in the current of history that "clearly cannot avoid being influenced to a certain extent by the changing conditions in which they have to operate."²⁵

Although the above two distinctions did not question the previous condemnations of Communism by the Church's magisterium, by no longer approaching the question of false doctrines according to the traditional deductive categories, they did provide a theoretical basis for dialogue and cooperation with the modern world, including Communism. From the distinction between the error and the person fallen into error, as well as between philosophical views and historical realization, there logically followed the third basic principle of the Vatican's eastern policy, which held that despite ideological antagonisms the possibility of cooperation "in the attainment of economic, social, cultural and political advantages"²⁶ need not be ruled out *ab ovo*.²⁷

Whereas John XXIII highlighted first and foremost those criteria that established the possibility of dialogue between the Church and Communism,²⁸ Paul VI, though likewise firmly convinced that mere condemnation was an inadequate response to the challenge of Communism,²⁹ while continuing the eastern policy begun by his predecessor, in his statements spoke in more nuanced terms, in as much as he placed greater emphasis on factors hindering rapprochement. One of the first signs of this shift in emphasis can be detected in his opening address to the second session. In it Paul, like John came out in favor of dialogue with the modern world, and also urged those present to approach the Communists with love; yet he did not refrain from criticizing the Communist regimes either for still not allowing numerous bishops in the socialist countries to attend.³⁰

The continuity between the pontificates of John XXIII and Paul VI can be discerned in the fact that one of the central themes of the new pope's

programmatic encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam*, published on August 6, 1964, was dialogue. However, the document struck a more cautious tone than *Pacem in Terris*, which disappointed the Communist regimes³¹ and signaled a certain measure of change. In the circular, called the “encyclical of dialogue”³² by Archbishop Cardinal Franz König of Vienna, Paul VI, after presenting the Church’s image of itself and urging the inner renewal indispensable for approaching the ideal image of the Church, devoted particular attention to the question of dialogue with the world. According to his teaching the pope, who uniquely wrote the entire text of the document himself,³³ declared dialogue an explicit obligation of the Church, emphasizing that it stemmed from its apostolic mission that through dialogue it should lead people to God and be open to dialogue towards all.³⁴ For Paul, it clearly followed from his declaration, taken from the Gospel of John (“For God sent not His Son into the world to judge the world, but that the world may be saved by Him”; Jn. 3, 17), that dialogue between the Church and the world “is found in the very plan of God,” since “[r]eligion, of its very nature, is a certain relationship between God and man.”³⁵

By elaborating the “transcendental origin of dialogue,”³⁶ Paul VI became the continuator of the opening begun by John XXIII. Regarding the practical possibility of dialogue between the Church and Communism, however, he was not as optimistic as his predecessor. It was not merely because of the denial of God’s existence, and the practically unbridgeable theoretical antagonisms resulting from this, that he called dialogue with Marxism quite difficult, if not impossible, at the given moment in time. He also saw a serious obstacle in the fact that it did not matter that the Church tried to articulate its teaching in a language generally understandable to the world if Communist ideological pronouncements used concepts identical in their external form but often concealing entirely differing content. For this reason Paul VI, though he himself considered dialogue with the world, including the Communists, important, necessary and (with the distinction between the system of doctrines and the persons professing the doctrines) theoretically possible, in lieu of a common language he questioned whether conducting substantive dialogue with Marxist regimes was possible at the given moment. In light of the second basic principle formulated by John XXIII he saw hope for genuine dialogue only in the future: “Bearing mind the words of our predecessor of venerable memory, Pope John XXIII, in his

Encyclical *Pacem in Terris* to the effect that the doctrines of such movements, once elaborated and defined, remain always the same, whereas the movements themselves cannot help but evolve and undergo changes, even of a profound nature, we do not despair that they may one day be able to enter into a more positive dialogue with the Church than the present one which we now of necessity deplore and lament”³⁷

It was this hope in the future that prompted Paul VI, despite the experiences of “the painful recent past” and the rejection of atheist Marxism in principle, to continue the negotiations begun with the Communist regimes. At the same time, the pope, not wanting to worsen the situation of the churches behind the Iron Curtain, did not consider it practical to voice in every instance the facts supporting the concerns he also raised in *Ecclesiam Suam*. The papal address delivered on September 12, 1965 at the Catacombs of Domitilla, in which, rather than urging dialogue he instead cautioned against excessive conformity to the world, at the same time faithfully reflects the doubts the pontiff continued to harbor about dialogue and the new eastern policy.³⁸

Paul VI’s doubts about the feasibility of dialogue with Communism also had an impact—indirectly—on the final text of the conciliar document *Gaudium et Spes*. While from the beginning he had been opposed to the Council solemnly condemning atheistic Communism (based on his negative experiences acquired in the practice of *Ostpolitik* and under the impact of the arguments of critics of the Holy See’s eastern policy³⁹) the pope felt the proposal by *Coetus Internationalis Patrum*⁴⁰ urging condemnation to be worthy of consideration. He had no objection to the content of the addendum, being put forward by a minority of council fathers; in agreement with the previous condemnations (*condamnatio*) of the Magisterium, in *Ecclesiam Suam* he himself rejected (*reprobat*) the erroneous teachings of Marxism. Paul VI articulated his dilemma concerning the issue in a memorandum prepared for Msgr. Pericle Felici, the council secretary, on November 15, 1965. Whereas rejecting the *Coetus* proposal would create the impression that the Church was withdrawing its earlier condemnatory stances, the repeated solemn articulation of the condemnation negatively impact the fate of Catholics in Communist states and would at the same time run counter to the spirit of the Council, according to which it “does not touch ‘political’ questions, does not pronounce anathemas, and does not speak of Communism.”⁴¹ To decide the

issue, the pope ended up convoking a conference exclusively with the leaders of Vatican II's Council of Presidents, Secretariat and the commission drafting the document. It was at this conference that a compromise proposal, put forward by Felici in the knowledge of the pope's memorandum, was adopted; in this, use of the term "Communism" was avoided and reference to earlier documents voicing condemnation was placed in a footnote.⁴²

1.3.2. The spheres of Vatican Ostpolitik

As the theoretical bases for dialogue between the Church and Communism were gradually elaborated, the Holy See's new *Ostpolitik* continued to take shape concurrently with the Second Vatican Council. While the feelers initiated by Pope John XXIII in the thawing international climate (closely connected to the pastoral, universal and ecumenical dimensions of the announced Council) were aimed primarily at improving the situation of Catholics living behind the Iron Curtain and drawing closer to the Orthodox churches, based on the experiences gained in practice by the time of Vatican II the eastern policy had been enriched by a further criterion.

The efforts to ensure the attendance of bishops working in the countries of the Socialist Bloc and Orthodox observers from Moscow had again made it clear that while the so-called *Ostpolitik* had never been aimed directly at the Soviet Union,⁴³ the road to achieving the aims of the Holy See's eastern policy led through Moscow.⁴⁴ From this recognition three closely interconnected tasks followed. First and foremost, the Holy See's international authority needed to be acknowledged and increased. In addition, to achieve this, it was indispensable for the Vatican, previously grouped with the allies of the United States,⁴⁵ to articulate its independence and its independent foreign-policy thinking, since only in this case was there hope that both sides would take it seriously.⁴⁶ Finally, in order to establish relations with Moscow and implement a successful policy of *détente*, those subjects in which both the Holy See and the Soviet leadership had a common interest had to be found.⁴⁷

One possible starting point for negotiations between the Vatican and the Communist governments was economic assistance. After Vatican efforts of the 1920s in this direction proved unsuccessful, however, the eastern policy

associated with John XXIII sought out new areas.⁴⁸ Likewise between the two world wars the idea of building ties based on the Soviet Union's strivings for international acceptance was also raised. For the newly formed Bolshevik state, obtaining the recognition of the Holy See would have been an undoubtedly significant achievement. The Communist leadership, however, had been unwilling to either guarantee the freedom of religious education requested as compensation or even permit the replenishment of the Catholic hierarchy with state approval. For this reason, by 1927 negotiations had broken off.⁴⁹ Later, during the Second World War, in vain did Pius XII signal to the Soviet Union that the Holy See was not averse to establishing diplomatic relations, since at this time rapprochement of any kind was no longer in Moscow's interest.⁵⁰ It was within the framework of international détente commencing after Stalin's death that the situation gradually began to change. As we have seen, however, this time it was Pius XII who treated Soviet attempts at rapprochement with reservation. It was John XXIII who—following among other things, the birthday greetings from Khrushchev on November 15, 1961—once again increasingly began to consider the possibilities inherent in the Soviet Union's yearnings for international prestige. This intention moreover coincided with the ambition of both John XXIII and Paul VI, which aimed—in order to assert the basic theological principle of *sollicitudo omnium ecclesiarum*⁵¹—to regain the previous role played by the Holy See in international affairs, or at least open up new prospects.⁵²

The common need to increase international prestige, though stemming from different motivations, might have provided a suitable framework for rapprochement between the Vatican and Moscow, but this in and of itself would have been too abstract an area for establishing direct relations. For this reason, the securing of international peace became the primary arena for practical cooperation. Though the “peace struggle” had long been featured in the propaganda of Communist regimes, and the policy of peaceful coexistence announced by Khrushchev in 1961—lacking objective legal and ethical bases—likewise remained for the most part an empty slogan,⁵³ the possibility of an atomic war capable of destroying everything spurred the Soviet Union also to avoid a global conflict. And this was viewed by both John XXIII and Paul VI as a suitable guarantee of cooperation in the interest of world peace.

Urging the resolution of conflicts by pacific means had been allotted an important place in the popes' teaching even prior to John XXIII. Pius XII's

pronouncements in the cause of peace (especially in the atmosphere of the Cold War) had not resonated globally, however, since the Socialist Bloc considered the Holy See as unequivocally serving the policy of the West and the United States. Thus, the fact that in the politically polarized world John XXIII judged the defense of world peace to be of particular importance from the viewpoint of the Church's work and made it one of the priorities of his pontificate did not represent the true novelty of his achievement.⁵⁴ Rather, it was the fact that his tone, differing from that of his predecessor, pastoral in outlook and careful to avoid condemnatory pronouncements, had the effect of making the Holy See's political impartiality (*imparzialità*), which incidentally had been the key concept of Vatican policy since the First World War, more tangible.⁵⁵ In addition to Pope John XXIII's disposition, the shift to the left of international opinion and the political climate also played decisive roles in the positive reception of the Holy See's statements in the interest of peace.⁵⁶

The success of the new tone used by John XXIII, that is, recognition of the Holy See's political impartiality and the increase of its international prestige, is indicated by the fact that both super powers accepted the pope's mediating role in resolving the Cuban Missile Crisis.⁵⁷ President John F. Kennedy responded to the discovery of launchers constructed in Cuba and capable of firing Soviet atomic missiles by placing the island country under a naval blockade on October 22, 1962; at the same time, the announcement that America would react to a possible attack launched from Cuba as if it had been launched from the Soviet Union seriously raised the danger of a new, now nuclear war erupting. Although this served the interests of neither Moscow nor Washington, under the given circumstances, it did not seem that either side could back down without a serious loss of face. It was in this stalemate that the rector of Pro Deo University in Rome, Felix A. Morlion took action. Attending a conference of Soviet and American scientists and journalists meeting at the Phillips Academy in Andover, Massachusetts as an observer, Morlion (who during the Second World War had been in contact with American intelligence⁵⁸), proposed that a papal address might help to resolve the crisis. Following with concern the deepening crisis, John XXIII likewise showed a readiness to assume the role of mediator, provided he received assurance that his intercession would find a favorable reception by both sides. After learning that both Kennedy and Khrushchev were

favorably disposed to papal mediation through the attendees of the Andover conference, he set about implementing the plan.

As if to prepare the ground, on October 24 he added a brief addendum to his address to a group of Portuguese pilgrims, in which he praised those state leaders “who strive to come together for the sake of avoiding war and ensuring peace for humanity.”⁵⁹ Then, at noon on October 25 in an extraordinary radio message in French he turned to “all men of good will” and called on them to preserve the peace. The official papal message, forwarded in advance to the American and Soviet embassies in Rome, warned the governments of the world, without mentioning Kennedy and Khrushchev by name, to “hear the cry of humanity” and “do all that is in their power to save peace.”⁶⁰

While it is debatable how large the actual role of the papal message was in resolving the crisis,⁶¹ in terms of increasing the Holy See’s international weight its significance was by no means negligible. The advance approval (if not urging)⁶² of the pope’s intervention and subsequent resonance unmistakably show that by now both superpowers acknowledged the Holy See’s moral authority and impartiality. With regard to the future of Vatican *Ostpolitik*, the fact that even the *Pravda*, the official paper of the CPSU, devoted an entire article to the pope’s message may be regarded as particularly significant.⁶³ This opened up a new horizon in Soviet–Vatican relations.

During the pontificate of John XXIII, the Holy See’s authority, growing in the eyes of the Kremlin as well, was still linked expressly to the person of the pope. The personal nature of this prestige had characterized the exchange of Christmas messages between Khrushchev and the pope in 1962.⁶⁴ It may likewise be assessed as a personal gesture to John XXIII that Khrushchev, at the intercession of the Russian Orthodox council observers as well as an American journalist close to Kennedy, Norman Cousins, finally agreed to release the Greek Catholic archbishop of L’viv, Josyp Slipyj.⁶⁵ In a similar way, the awarding of the Balzan Peace Prize to John XXIII was expressly related to his person.⁶⁶

Nor should the first—informal—Soviet–Vatican summit be ascribed primarily to the pope personally merely because the private audience granted to Aleksei Adzhubei and his wife Rada Khrushcheva (visiting Rome in connection with the conferral of the Balzan Peace Prize), was the personal decision of the pope—despite the reservations of the Curia. The words of Khrushchev’s son-in-law during a press conference in Milan on March 12,

1963 also indicate that the Soviet leadership began to regard the Holy See, seen “not merely as a religious center but also a political factor,” as an important player in international political life, expressly based on the pronouncements made by the head of the Catholic Church for the cause of peace.⁶⁷

With the promulgation of the encyclical *Pacem in Terris* and the negotiations with the Central European states initiated in the spring of 1963 as part of the new *Ostpolitik*, the Holy See’s prestige began to grow independently of John XXIII’s person. The magisterial declaration, detailing the conditions for international peace and approved by the majority that had coalesced during the first session of Vatican II, could no longer be viewed merely as the pope’s personal position. The bilateral negotiations under way in turn necessarily brought with them the increased involvement of the Secretariat of State.⁶⁸ Nonetheless, the Vatican’s emerging new eastern policy remained linked to a great extent with the figure of John XXIII. Thus it is no wonder that following his death on June 3, 1963 observers inside and outside the Church eagerly awaited the election of the new pope to see whether he would continue the policy begun by his predecessor.

Somewhat paradoxically, the process whereby the Holy See’s international prestige was becoming more independent of the person of the pope was in part promoted precisely by the certain degree of reservation with which the Communist leaders received the newly elected Paul VI.⁶⁹ Based on the new pontiff’s disposition, which differed from that of his predecessor, as well as his preference for conducting diplomacy via the Vatican’s traditional means instead of through personal channels, key players in international politics sought to establish contact with him not so much for his personal magnetism but rather for his rank as the leading representative of the Holy See.

On the other hand, Paul VI himself likewise pushed for the “institutional” presence of the Holy See in international political life.⁷⁰ The landmark event in this was his visit to the United Nations during the Council’s fourth session in October 1965. The pope’s appearance at the United Nations’ General Assembly in and of itself underscored the analogy between the international organization’s universal service, standing above nations, and the Catholic Church’s universal service, standing above political blocs. Paul VI’s address before the General Assembly reinforced this impression.⁷¹ In his introductory remarks he emphasized on the one hand that the Holy See did not wish to

intervene in questions of this world that fell within the competence of the UN, but rather wished, as a transmitter of a universal message to all of humanity, only to contribute through its own means to the service performed by the world organization for the sake of mankind. Moreover, speaking on behalf of the casualties and survivors of wars as well as the world's poor, he appeared at once as a partner in dialogue who stood above the conflicts between East and West, as well as North and South.

The pope's address before the UN General Assembly at the same time also offered an opportunity to give voice to the central element of the Holy See's Moscow-oriented eastern policy, the Vatican's commitment to peace and arms reductions. Following in John XXIII's footsteps, Paul VI did not content himself with calling for the preservation of peace. In keeping with the emerging Catholic openness to the modern world, and the principles set out in *Pacem in Terris*, he explicitly considered cooperation among states desirable. As a possible area for cooperation he also reiterated a proposed common solution he made during his trip to Bombay to the two most burning problems in international life: increasing poverty and famine in the Third World, and the limitation of the arms race. To aid the starving, he declared the desirability of establishing an international monetary fund to be financed with the sums freed up as a result of arms reductions.⁷²

Paul VI's trip to Washington likewise represented a serious step forward in Soviet-Vatican relations. During his visit to the UN the pope held talks with Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko. The summit, which touched upon the key issues of international politics, was of significance primarily as the first occasion when a high-ranking Soviet politician in office met with the head of the Catholic Church.⁷³ At the same time, the sides did not discuss expressly church policy issues during the talks. Thus, they merely indirectly served the primary objectives of the Holy See's eastern policy, since the channel of direct communication coming into existence between the Vatican and Moscow created only the remote possibility of debating questions affecting the fate of Catholics living in the Soviet sphere of interest.⁷⁴

Finally, Paul VI's address before the UN General Assembly had a significant impact on the work of the Second Vatican Council as well. Namely, it provided arguments and criteria for the contested questions of the last chapter of Schema 13. Thus, the pastoral constitution, which detailed the relationship of the modern world and the Catholic Church, by clarifying the Church's

relationship to atheistic Communism not only laid the foundations for the bilateral relations started with the Communist governments, but the teaching of *Gaudium et Spes* on the question of war and peace also provided a theoretical basis for the international dimension of the Holy See's eastern policy to further evolve. Moreover, the fact that one of Vatican II's documents likewise expounded the Church's position on questions important with respect to the emerging *Ostpolitik*, helped to make the Holy See's international authority more independent of the person of the reigning pope.

As noted above, the Holy See's increased participation in international politics, and along with this its resolute action to preserve the peace, was the logical consequence of the steps taken to resolve concrete pastoral questions. One such area, closely linked with the announcement of the Second Vatican Council, was ecumenism. The establishment of relations with the Russian Orthodox Church represented a necessary element in the Catholic Church's ecumenical opening initiated by Pope John XXIII since within the broader framework of ecumenism Orthodox-Catholic dialogue appeared inconceivable if the Patriarchate of Moscow, who carried significant weight within Orthodoxy, were to be excluded.⁷⁵

Direct contact was first established in July 1962. In response to a proposal by Johannes Willebrands, secretary of the Secretariat for Christian Unity (attending the meeting of the World Council of Churches as an observer and representative of the Vatican), Nikodim (Rotov), archbishop of Yaroslavl and head of foreign affairs for the Moscow Patriarchate, did not rule out sending observers to the Second Vatican Council. At the same time the Orthodox cleric made it clear that the possibility of attendance did not depend exclusively on the Church's decision. It was in this context that the condemnation of Communism became linked with the potential presence of Russian observers. Their attendance became possible only after the Catholic Church, first at the meeting between Nikodim and Cardinal Eugène Tisserant, dean of the College of Cardinals, in Metz, then during Willebrands's trip to Moscow in September 1962, had offered the Kremlin, indirectly, appropriate guarantees that the Council would refrain from openly condemning Communism.⁷⁶

However, the contacts the Vatican established with the Patriarchate of Moscow were significant not only with respect to the success of the Council and the Catholic Church's ecumenical ties. Apart from the incidental

meeting between John XXIII and Adzhubei, right up until the meeting between Paul VI and Soviet Foreign Minister Andrei Gromyko in October 1965 ecumenical relations represented the only continuously functioning channel between Moscow and Rome.⁷⁷ In lieu of the diplomatic contacts characteristic primarily of the Catholic-majority states of Central Europe, it was only Vatican II and the various ecumenical summits that ensured constant, albeit indirect, contact between the Soviet leadership and the Vatican.⁷⁸ For this reason, during the pontificates of John XXIII and Paul VI the Holy See placed particular weight on cultivating relations with the Patriarchate of Moscow: by building ecumenical ties it attempted to support the largest Christian denomination in the Soviet Union, forced to operate under difficult circumstances, and in the interests of good relations—as, for example, in the case of the Ukrainian Greek Catholics—occasionally it was also prepared to place Catholic interests in the background.⁷⁹

Naturally, the primary aim of the Holy See's pastorally motivated diplomacy remained at all times the preservation of the unity of the Catholic Church and the protection of its believers' interests.⁸⁰ Nor was Vatican eastern policy motivated by anything other than the Holy See's ambition to improve the situation of the churches that had come under Communist rule. It was Pope John XXIII who had linked this ambition with the announcement of the Council. He had recognized that in order to take the appropriate steps it was necessary first of all to create the possibility of re-establishing direct contacts with the local churches, which had been almost completely isolated for a decade and a half. From the start, therefore, his intention had been to ensure the presence of the bishops of these countries at the Council, even if this meant compromises. On this behalf, as early as the summer of 1959 Msgr Sanz Villalba Sotero, a collaborator of the Section for Ordinary Affairs of the Vatican's Secretariat of State, confirmed to the agent of Hungarian intelligence in Rome, "Amadeo," that in the Vatican

nothing less than a settlement of the relationship between the Church and the popular democratic states, a solution to the problem, is expected of the Council: according to him the Vatican's ideological prejudices and bureaucratic traditions place obstacles in the way of negotiations with the governments concerned which the Secretariat of State cannot manage to overcome, for which reason in the stalemate the collaboration of a new

factor, i.e., the Universal Council, which at present beckons with success, seems desirable. [...] During repeated conversations with Sotero it appeared to me as the unconcealed desire of the Vatican that they desire the attendance at the Council of the bishops from the popular democratic states: the summons addressed to the Polish and Hungarian bishops to the *ad limina* visit was in fact an attempt to discern whether they possessed sufficient freedom to maneuver.⁸¹

Resuming direct contact with the bishops behind the Iron Curtain, and through them supplementing and clarifying the existing information about the situation of the local churches, represented only a precondition for taking further measures. It was during the second phase, likewise with the participation of the local bishops, that the list of the most important issues affecting the Church and requiring resolution was compiled. Thereafter, however, the role of the local bishops faded, precisely for the reason that Communist church policy directly interfered in matters concerning the Church's internal life, and as a consequence it became obvious to those guiding the Vatican's eastern policy: conducting substantive negotiations through the intermediation of the bishops would be impossible; rather, direct meetings between the Vatican and the representatives of the given country would have to be held. During the course of the bilateral talks underway, however, the role of the local bishops as a rule was limited to giving advice and providing information.⁸²

In the case of every state the replacement of the hierarchy, that is, the filling of vacant episcopal sees, represented a primary topic of the bilateral negotiations. In accordance with the Catholic Church's mission, the Holy See strove above all else to administer the sacraments and oversee the pastoral care of the faithful, even if this demanded compromises. The other major subject of the negotiations was the question of the Church's freedom. In this context, in addition to ecclesiastical administration, maintaining ties to Rome, education of priests and freedom of religious education, the bishops' and priests' oath of loyalty to the state, the peace priest movement and the authorizing of the religious orders were included on the agenda. Likewise falling under this heading was the settlement of the situation of imprisoned or impeded bishops and priests. Finally, in connection with specific ecclesiastical matters, issues concerning international relations, such

as the possibility of setting up papal representations or the alignment of diocesan borders with the post-World War II state borders, were also raised.

With its pastoral motivation Vatican eastern policy in principle aimed to improve the situation of all churches that had come under Communist rule. In practice, however, achieving this at first proved completely unfeasible on the territory of the Soviet Union (in the case of the Catholics of Ukraine, Belarus, and Latvia), just like in the case of those states refusing to grant their bishops permission to take part in the Second Vatican Council. Thus, it was first of all towards Yugoslavia, Hungary, Czechoslovakia, Poland, East Germany and—curiously—Lithuania⁸³ that an opportunity to launch the new *Ostpolitik* presented itself. At the same time, in the case of these countries, too, the Holy See's moves were influenced to a significant degree by the necessities stemming from local peculiarities.⁸⁴

Tito's Yugoslavia was unique because of its independence within the Socialist Bloc, something also reflected in the relative freedom of the Catholic Church there. Poland, where the Catholic Church was uniquely embedded in society and consequently strong, could not be compared with the situation in other countries. Moreover, under such circumstances Vatican intervention also appeared less urgent. The minority East German Church, which operated in a mostly Protestant environment, was relatively less exposed to the oppression of the state organs, thanks perhaps also to the fact that some of its episcopal sees were located in Western territories, likewise increasing its room to maneuver.

Improving the Church's situation in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Lithuania seemed to be the greatest urgency.⁸⁵ At the same time, the consent of these states to allow some of the bishops (or, in the case of Lithuania, a few priests) to travel to the Council, gave cause for hope. It is no coincidence, therefore, that it was towards Budapest and Prague that the Holy See took the first steps in its *Ostpolitik*, first via the intermediation of these bishops and later, after the first council session, through its own diplomats.⁸⁶ In the end, Lithuania was excluded because despite earlier hopes the Vatican's attempt to establish contact via the priests attending the first session remained unanswered. Despite the many initial similarities experienced in the Czech and Hungarian cases, it would be in Hungary where the negotiations finally first led to a partial success in 1964.

1.4. *MODUS NON MORIENDI* IN HUNGARY

1.4.1. *The road to Vatican–Hungarian negotiations*

John XXIII's activity in seeking to secure the presence of the East Central European bishops at the Council ultimately met with partial success. With the exceptions of Romania, Albania, Latvia, and Lithuania a few bishops arrived in Rome from all countries.⁸⁷ The pope's intention—as had been seen—was not exclusively to ensure the Council's universal character. From its very announcement he regarded the Council as a suitable opportunity to enter once more into contact with the bishops of all the socialist countries with whom Rome had lost the possibility of maintaining direct ties in the late 1940s.

In light of the antecedents, it is not surprising that John XXIII received the Hungarian bishops already on the third day following their arrival in Rome, at noon on October 9, 1962.⁸⁸ Another papal private audience followed near the end of the first session, at 6pm on November 25. The significance of this is shown by the fact that despite his fatigue and his illness (which would be made public two days later), the pontiff spent a longer time with the Hungarian council fathers than had been scheduled.⁸⁹ Even though the concrete questions related to the situation of the Hungarian Church were brought up already during the papal audiences, the detailed negotiations—logically—were conducted within the various congregations.

Almost as a substitute for the unrealized *ad limina* visits, the Holy See in the first place wished to clarify its information pertaining to the state of the Hungarian Church. Although the Hungarian bishops' written reports⁹⁰ and verbal communications “essentially” (*sostanzialmente*) confirmed the data obtained by the Secretariat of State through other channels,⁹¹ there still remained plenty to clarify with respect to the specific details. A striking example of this was the lack of precise information pertaining to the actual situation of the bishops impeded in their functions. Based on the written report received from the Secretariat of State, Pope John XXIII during the November 25 audience included among them auxiliary Bishops Imre Szabó of Esztergom and Mihály Endrey of Eger, and he also proved uninformed about Gellért Belon and József Winkler. When Hamvas interjected that Szabó and Endrey were not *impeditus* since both were allowed to confirm,

and Brezanóczy added that Belon and Winkler also could not be regarded as impeded because they were not even consecrated, the pope became confused. He then declared that he would instruct the Secretariat of State the next day to discuss the entire question coherently with the three Hungarian prelates.⁹² This was how the actual situation of the impeded bishops was cleared up, as a consequence of which Casaroli's report, composed on May 18, 1963—following his trip to Budapest—contains precise information about Belon and Winkler, and nuanced wording concerning Endrey and Imre Szabó: "Endrey [...] for a time resided in forced confinement, but as a matter of fact could not be regarded as 'impeded' because he did not have a defined ecclesiastical function; recently the provisions concerning confinement have been lifted for him also; (I would note that nor in the case of His Excellency Msgr. Szabó, former auxiliary bishop of His Eminence Cardinal Mindszenty, can we speak of 'impediment' in the canonical sense: he has no office and no forced confinement has even been designated for him)."⁹³

In any event, the Secretariat of State found itself in a difficult situation when seeking to form as accurate a picture as possible of the Hungarian Church. For it is clear that the communications of the bishops, traveling with state approval, must be handled with some reservations. They did not content themselves with impressions of the various Hungarian prelates obtained during the official negotiations.⁹⁴ They therefore attempted to verify their sincerity by various ways and means. This purpose was served, for example, by the conversations and debates the émigré priests had with the Hungarian council fathers,⁹⁵ which the Hungarian state organs assessed as an attempt to influence them.⁹⁶ It appears that among the leaders of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute István Mester may have been the one also specially assigned to monitor the Hungarian council delegation. At least this is indicated by the fact that, as Agent "Kékes" told it, he appeared at the Hungarians' residence several times, and on most of these occasions he would stop at the reception and even consult with the principal of the *Domus Mariae*.⁹⁷

To verify the sincerity of the Hungarian prelates, their former schoolmates living in Rome were also utilized. The conversations with acquaintances from youth, dispensing with all official formalities, were seen as particularly suited for assessing the personal thinking of each council father. This is indicated by the fact that the meeting that Pál Brezanóczy urged with his erstwhile schoolmate in Innsbruck, the Slovene-born Vatican diplomat Josip Žabkar,

took place with the pope's knowledge; Angelo Dell'Acqua, head of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, attached an account of their conversation to the report he prepared for Casaroli on his discussions with the apostolic administrator of Eger, adding the following remark: "A quite interesting document that deserves to be read in its entirety."⁹⁸

The other well documented attempt to verify information about the situation of the Hungarian Church was initiated from the Secretariat of State. After Florio Banfi, an agent working for Hungarian intelligence codenamed "Arnold," on instructions from his superiors succeeded in calling the attention of his contacts in the Secretariat of State to the fact that he had been a schoolmate of Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely,⁹⁹ the secretary of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs decided to take advantage of the opportunity inherent in the relationship. On November 16, 1962 Samorè entrusted Banfi with trying to obtain intelligence from the bishop of Szombathely on the following issues: "The influence of the state on the bishops' free will; in what way the bishops' will is restricted (not the hindrance of certain episcopal duties is meant) and how decrees conflicting with their conscience are imposed on them; whether the bishops have any way of seeking an audience with the state authorities in the event of decrees conflicting with their conscience; what means or methods the bishops avail themselves of to defend their freedom of conscience; whether one can speak at all of the Hungarian bishops' spiritual freedom? [...] Not only theoretical clarifications are needed but also factual data (*dati di fatto*) which confirm the assertion, and furthermore all reports that pertain to the relationship between the bishops and the state."¹⁰⁰

If Banfi's account is to be believed,¹⁰¹ Samorè even justified the goal of "Operation Kovács" *expressis verbis*: "You have seen that our press has always excused the bishops from the states of the *oltrecortina* [beyond the Iron Curtain—A. F.], and has accused those governments of holding our bishops captive. And yet now those same bishops proclaim from on high that their conduct has been guided by the convictions of their own consciences, and not compulsion by the state power. We are not averse to revising our previous convictions, but for this we must know the true situation."¹⁰²

Finally, the reliability and sincerity of the council fathers arriving from the Socialist Bloc were verified by means of the secret service as well. The sources available at present do not make it possible to verify the

information of Hungarian intelligence, according to which “the Vatican Secretariat of State asked the Italian government to set up a security service alongside those attending the Council.” Nor can it be verified whether this special service, led by Gendarme Sergeant Francesco Villa and employing agents from the Burgenland as well, was to have monitored “first of all the activity of the bishops of the socialist countries in Rome.”¹⁰³ However, there is no reason to call into question the fact that the Italian secret service—regardless of whether the Vatican (possibly in the person of Igino Cardinale, head of protocol in the Secretariat of State), made such a request¹⁰⁴—attempted to monitor persons arriving from the Eastern Bloc. The activities of the Italian secret service were noticed by Hungarian intelligence and its ecclesiastical agents on the ground.¹⁰⁵

The discussions with the bishops and the requested written reports not only buttressed the belief that the Communist governments ensured at most minimal religious freedom to the tightly controlled Church. At the same time, during the meetings the employees of the Secretariat of State gained the impression that the Czechoslovak, Hungarian, and Lithuanian clerics present in Rome had been allowed out (or sent) to the Council by their governments for the purpose of initiating negotiations with the Holy See.¹⁰⁶ How to reply the Communist governments’ cautious feelers, however, was by no means a straightforward matter.

The Holy See’s theoretical position was that the condition for beginning negotiations was the guarantee of minimal religious freedom. Yet because this minimum had not been realized in any socialist country, the Holy See had to weigh whether—yielding to the request of the Central European bishops present at the Council—it was willing to make concessions and commence dialogue even in the absence of the theoretically fixed conditions. The decision was made even more difficult by the uncertainty about whether those bishops whom the regime did not allow to attend the Council would also urge leniency towards the state.¹⁰⁷

Based on the proposal summarizing the situation of the Czechoslovak, Hungarian, and Lithuanian churches and the experiences of deliberations with the prelates, the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs at its meeting on November 27, 1962 resolved that for the sake of improving the lot of the local churches the extraordinary opportunity to establish relations offered by the presence at the Council of the bishops from beyond the “Iron

Curtain” must not be squandered, but at the same time the Holy See’s expectations also had to be made known.¹⁰⁸ After Pope John XXIII had also approved the decision taken by the corresponding section of the Secretariat of State,¹⁰⁹ the implementation of the resolution could begin.

Taking into account the arguments articulated at the meeting of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, members of the Secretariat of State conducted additional talks with the prelates attending the Council, summarizing the Holy See’s stance on the state of church policy in each country in brief memoranda.¹¹⁰ Although the documents do not reveal unequivocally who the addressee was, it appears obvious that the Holy See intended the memoranda for the government of the given country. An indication of this is that when Secretary of State Amleto Cicognani familiarized the Hungarian bishops with the memorandum, bearing the title *nota verbale*, on December 6, 1962, he emphasized that the document was not a concordat but should be regarded merely as a first step indicating the Holy See’s good will towards Hungary.¹¹¹ There is no unequivocal information as to whether the Holy See explicitly entrusted the Hungarian bishops with forwarding the undated and unsigned *nota verbale*, which Antonio Samorè handed Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád on December 7, to the Hungarian government. What is known, however, is that the Czechoslovak bishops did receive such instructions upon being handed a similar document drafted for them at the Secretariat of State, and this fact also supports the assertion that the *nota verbale* handed to the Hungarians was ultimately addressed to the Hungarian government.¹¹²

In the verbal note the Holy See, stressing its willingness to negotiate, explained its position on questions of key importance in resolving the situation of the Hungarian Church.¹¹³ The filling of the vacant episcopal sees took first priority. From the point of view of the Catholic Church’s future and ministering to the pastoral care of the faithful, the Holy See attributed primary importance to restoring the hierarchy. However, as was alluded to in more detail above, at the start of the Vatican II only six of the eleven dioceses in Hungary were administered by consecrated bishops, and the latter were quite advanced in age. The five remaining dioceses were headed either by apostolic administrators appointed by the Holy See, or by vicars capitular, who had been elected by the chapters under pressure from the state and whose legitimacy was thus disputable from the standpoint of canon

law. To remedy the situation, the Holy See showed itself willing “before the selection of the bishops or apostolic administrators to await the consent of the candidates handpicked by it.”¹¹⁴ The wording concealed a suggestion for a practical procedure, by which first the candidate was notified of the fact of the appointment and then this was made public only after the person in question had obtained state approval, either personally or through the Bench of Bishops. Naturally, the Holy See continued to uphold its claim to complete freedom to appoint bishops and officially did not recognize the state’s right of approval, though in practice it considered the above procedure tolerable.¹¹⁵ It was these two criteria that were combined in the cases of József Winkler and Gellért Belon. By once again designating the auxiliary bishop of Szombathely and apostolic administrator of Kalocsa, who lacking state approval had not even been consecrated (Samorè had handed Bishop Hamvas the two sealed letters concerning this along with the *nota verbale* on December 7),¹¹⁶ the Holy See on the one hand tangibly signaled its insistence on the right to freely make appointments and its refusal to recognize the state laws restricting this, but on the other hand treating the previous appointments as not having happened also meant an acknowledgment of the actual situation, that is, a concession.¹¹⁷

The second point in the *nota verbale*, concerning the bishops’ oath of loyalty to the state, made it clear that while the Holy See did not support the taking of such oaths, as a concession it was willing to leave the decision whether or not to take the oath to the conscience of the ecclesiastics concerned. However, it found this permissible only if two conditions were met jointly. One *conditio sine qua non* was that the text of the oath should not contain passages unacceptable to the Church. In contrast to the text of the Czechoslovak state oath, which was found objectionable because it was sworn not to the state but to the “socialist regime,”¹¹⁸ no objections were raised in this area with regard to the Hungarian sample oath.¹¹⁹ At the same time, the *nota verbale* mentioned the fulfillment of the second condition (namely, that the oath should not apply to the priest’s conscience) as a problem to be solved. In the latter question the Holy See preferred the solution of attaching the customary formula (“as befits the bishop or priest” or “without prejudice to the rights of God and the Church”)—verbally or in writing—to the text every time the oath was taken. As a concession, however, it considered regulating the matter through a one-time exchange of official letters also acceptable.¹²⁰

It was in the first two points of the *nota verbale* that the Holy See discussed those two subjects in which it displayed a willingness to make practical concessions while maintaining its demands. By contrast, the third point dealt with issues in which Rome expected more compliant attitude on the part of the Hungarian government. In addition to guaranteeing the free administration of the dioceses and maintaining free contact between the bishops and the Holy See, the text, worded in generalities, urged an end to “anti-Church activity.” The explanations Secretary of State Amleto Cicognani attached to the document made it unequivocally clear that the Holy See saw the ministerial commissioners working within the bishoprics as the chief barrier to freedom of ecclesiastical governance. Cicognani considered it particularly harmful that the state authorities did not content themselves with restricting the bishops’ freedom to govern the Church but also enforced a veritable contraselection when assigning priests, since they gave their consent to the appointment of unworthy persons only. At the same time, the secretary of state’s verbal explanation also illuminated the fact that what the Holy See decried as “anti-Church manifestations”¹²¹ were a collective term for the subjects figuring in the subsequent negotiations (the freedom of religious life, religious education, evangelization and seminary training, etc.).¹²²

Finally, in order to maintain free contact between the Hungarian Church and the Holy See as urged in the previous point, the document handed to the Hungarian bishops on December 7, 1962 addressed a specific request to the Hungarian government: namely, that it agree to allow more Hungarian bishops to attend the next session of the Second Vatican Council. Nevertheless, the account by “Kékes” suggests that the demand for a larger council delegation did not concern exclusively relations between the Hungarian Church and the Holy See: “The second item under Item D seeks to promote the establishment of ties. I placed great emphasis on this, because in doing so I wished to place in the forefront first of all the full recognition of Our State and Government.”¹²³ The fact that the report speaks of promoting the establishment of ties, while mentioning recognition of the Hungarian government in the next sentence, allows us to conclude that the Holy See in addition regarded the authorization of a larger number of bishops to travel a request which, if fulfilled, would allow the Hungarian government to

demonstrate its good intentions and thereby meet one of the preconditions for establishing direct relations.

Although it cannot be ruled out that the Holy See sought with the fourth point of the *nota verbale* in part to achieve the above aims as well, the Vatican sources at our disposal do not confirm Brezanóczy's assertion unequivocally. The draft proposal prepared for the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs on November 27, 1962 reveals that the reason for the most serious doubt about pursuing the eastern policy is to be sought in the lack of adequate information. Because it was obvious that the bishops allowed out of the country had arrived in Rome with permission, and indeed, an assignment from the state, it was uncertain whether they were actually advocating the Church's position when urging the Holy See to make concessions: "Not every bishop has come out to Rome, however: a handful are imprisoned, others are impeded, still others, though free, still have not come. If they could be here, would they also plead for some sort of concession to the government?"¹²⁴ According to this, the primary aim of the request to allow a larger number of bishops must have been rather to secure the attendance of those bishops regarded as "reactionary" by the state but nevertheless allowed to perform their duties in order to be able to learn also the position of the part of the Hungarian Church that was less cooperative with the state authorities.

Likewise for the sake of gathering information from multiple sources the proposal raised the idea—almost as an alternative solution—of requesting permission for an apostolic visitor to travel to Hungary. This is indicated by the fact that simultaneously they sought to ensure for the future delegate free consultations with all ordinaries.¹²⁵ Even though the stance the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs adopted during its session of November 27, 1962 is not known, based on subsequent events it may be supposed that the proposal was not rejected *ab ovo*: the next day, on November 28, Casaroli made an obscure reference to this possibility to Pál Brezanóczy.¹²⁶ The suggestion caught the Hungarian prelate by surprise, but after a few days to think he fully embraced the idea. During his private conversation with Prelate Josip Žabkar on December 1 he now expressly urged that an apostolic visitor be sent to Hungary. To the Slovenian-born Vatican diplomat Brezanóczy argued in favor of implementing the plan by saying that the delegate would have the opportunity to become familiar with the true

situation of the Church, his appearance would mean encouragement to the Hungarians and, at the same time, it would demonstrate the Holy See's interest in Hungary.¹²⁷ However, Brezanóczy's report to the Hungarian authorities indicates another factor which may have played an important role in his support for the recommendation: "I placed great emphasis on this, because in doing so I wished to place in the forefront first of all the full recognition of Our State and Government, and on the other hand I believed communication-negotiation at this level itself to be much more fruitful in the long term than random negotiations, an opportunity presented to us by the Council, and *by this I also meant the relevant directives received at home.*"¹²⁸

Encouraged by the Hungarian émigré priests István Mester and József Zágon, the Hungarian council fathers finally addressed a written petition to the secretary of state asking the Holy See to send to Hungary a delegate who would negotiate with the government on the issues raised by the bishops.¹²⁹ Due to the confluence of the interests of the Secretariat of State, the Hungarian bishops (and government) and the émigré priests,¹³⁰ in the end a paragraph was inserted into the text of the *nota verbale* drafted for the Hungarians. This held out the prospect of sending an "ecclesiastic" to Hungary who was invested with an unspecified authority.¹³¹ The text of the document handed to the Hungarian bishops and the explanations articulated by the Holy See relating to it, nevertheless indicate that in the meantime the original position of the Secretariat of State had been modified somewhat. The text of the *nota verbale* spoke no longer of an apostolic visitor, nor would the task of the delegate have been restricted to simply gathering information, but—almost certainly influenced in part by the petition of the Hungarian prelates—his mandate would have extended to establishing relations with the government as well. The memorandum of Hungarian state security dated December 12, 1962 and undoubtedly based on the reports received from "Kékes," at least treated it as a foregone conclusion that the purpose of the Vatican delegate's visit was to negotiate with the government.¹³² This incidentally dovetailed with the intention of John XXIII, whose indirect aim—as we have seen—already at the convocation of the Council had been to create an opportunity to initiate contacts with the churches living in the socialist states, as well as in with the socialist governments themselves when possible.

The *nota verbale* handed to the Hungarian council fathers was meant to carry out the second part of this papal intention. John XXIII, however, was not content to see the other, perhaps more important element of his original purpose (namely, establishing relations with the Hungarian Church) be restricted to the ecclesiastics attending the Council. For the pope the Second Vatican Council, and the attendance of the Hungarian prelates, at the same time also provided an opportunity to send a message to the entire Hungarian people and Church and inform them of the Holy See's position.¹³³ The content of the message, read out in Hungarian churches on New Year's Eve, 1962 was essentially identical to what was laid out in the verbal note. The less specific wording may be explained by the different circle to whom it was addressed, as well as the specificities of the genre. The message repeated *expressis verbis* that point of the *nota verbale* which referred to the desire for more bishops to be allowed to attend the next session, while the text's carefully chosen words referred in veiled terms to the other points as well. That the pope hoped (*dum suavem hanc spem fovemus*) for "for good news" (*laeti nuntii*) in the future about the condition of the Hungarian Church (*rei catholicae conditio*) clearly signaled that he was not satisfied with the current state of affairs. The exhortation to persevere in the Christian faith (*perseverantia in christiana professione*) may be assessed as an oblique reference to the lack of freedom of church governance and religion.

The veiled references in the papal message did not escape the notice of the State Office for Church Affairs either. The sentence inserted emphatically in the center of the text ("If only the presence of the Nation's other bishops also could cheer Us in the next sessions of the Ecumenical Council and if only they could bring good news from there on the situation of the Catholic cause.") was regarded as nothing less than a provocation by "reactionary circles" and the émigrés in the Vatican. Arguing, however, that a prohibition might perhaps elicit the exaggerated interest of the faithful, they did not recommend preventing the papal message from being read out. To blunt the edge of the message, an appropriately worded circular letter would be sent by the Bench of Bishops, highlighting, as if in reply to the incriminated sentence, the improvement in the Church's situation already occurring: "May God grant that the head of the Church *continue* to receive good news from here about the activity of the Hungarian Church, and of the *continuous* favorable development of relations between the state and the Church."¹³⁴ Following the

proposal of the ÁEH, in the end the approval of the Politburo was needed for the papal message (three weeks after the conclusion of the Council!) to be read in Hungarian churches.¹³⁵

With the conclusion of the first session, the Holy See's effort to obtain information in order to assess the actual state of the Hungarian Church entered a new phase. The leaders of Hungarian church policy, however, were adverse to a visit by an apostolic visitor to Hungary, the solution considered the most appropriate by the Vatican. For the Holy See, the Hungarian government's dismissive stance regarding an apostolic visitor became clear already prior to Casaroli's trip to Budapest. Secretary of State Cicognani's inquiry received only a stonewalling reply from Bishop Hamvas.¹³⁶ Thus there remained only one possibility of learning the alternative Hungarian ecclesiastical position: a visit with Cardinal Mindszenty. Samorè inquired about whether the Hungarian authorities would consent to someone visiting the Hungarian primate on behalf of the Holy See during his meeting with Hamvas on November 11, 1962. After Hamvas unhesitatingly recommended König, the Secretariat of State commenced preparations for the Viennese cardinal to travel to Budapest.¹³⁷ The reply given by the bishop of Csanád led them to infer that the Hungarian government, interested in resolving the Mindszenty affair, would not place obstacles in the way of the two cardinals meeting. The plan, realized on April 18, 1963, finally made it possible for the Holy See to learn, apart from the bishops under government influence, the views of at least one prelate in Hungary concerning the situation of the Church.¹³⁸

The leaders of Hungarian church policy, however, not only prevented an envoy from the Vatican from gaining information on the situation of the Church on the ground. At first they also opposed the idea of the government conducting negotiations with the special deputy of the Holy See. Instead, right up until mid-April 1963 they attempted to ensure that in the future, too, Bishop Hamvas, who was more tightly controlled, mediated between the two sides while they sought to postpone the establishment of direct ties for as long as possible. On March 5, 1963 the State Office for Church Affairs took the stance that "the coming of an official Vatican delegate to Hungary for the time being is not desirable, because it would damage the loyal Hungarian church leaders' prestige and their ability to act, and would increase the role of the domestic reactionary ecclesiastics." József Prantner

instead recommended that Hamvas and Brezanóczy travel to Rome in May accompanied by two persons to negotiate a solution to the Mindszenty affair, as well as to the issues raised in the *nota verbale*.¹³⁹ The next recommendation, signed by the ÁEH chairman and dated March 22, 1963, no longer ruled out the possibility of the Holy See conducting negotiations through an official delegate with the Hungarian state, while bypassing intermediaries. However, it still placed the date for establishing relations into the distant future (“at the appropriate time”).¹⁴⁰

The Holy See accepted these plays for time only up until König’s trip to Budapest.¹⁴¹ To Endre Hamvas’s telegram of April 20, 1963, in which he indicated to Secretary of State Cicognani his desire to travel to Rome, in accordance with the wishes of the ÁEH, to prepare the ground for establishing direct contacts, on April 22 the secretary of state gave the following reply: Hamvas should not come to Rome but rather go to the nunciature in Vienna to negotiate with Casaroli, who had received authorization for this.¹⁴² After Casaroli, during a conversation with Hamvas and Brezanóczy on April 27 that lasted two and a half hours, had gained more precise information about the peace priest movement, the operation of the seminaries and church schools as well as the situation of the religious orders and had received the Hungarian government’s official reply to the *nota verbale*, the obstacle to the establishment of direct contacts was removed.¹⁴³

After such antecedents it was Casaroli’s talks in Budapest between May 7 and 9, 1963 that represented for the Holy See the final element of the fact-finding process preceding the actual negotiations. During the three-day meeting the undersecretary of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs was no longer briefed indirectly (i.e., through the Hungarian prelates) about the Hungarian government’s position concerning the situation of the Hungarian Church but directly from the leaders of the ÁEH. It was based on the experiences gained in the preparatory phase that the Holy See then had to decide whether or not it would be worthwhile to open negotiations with the Hungarian Communist leadership.¹⁴⁴

However, despite the fact that Casaroli reported his experiences to John XXIII in a private audience, and the pope regarded the negotiations with the leaders of the Central and East European states as almost a personal cause, the appraisal of the report on the talks and the determination of the next steps, took place only after a delay of several months: because of the pontiff’s

illness and then death on June 3, 1963 the task of determining the future steps to be taken now fell to his successor.¹⁴⁵

Paul VI proved to be—with the shifts in emphasis indicated in the preceding chapter—the continuator of the eastern policy begun by his predecessor. Shortly after his election as pope, he provided tangible evidence of this with regard to Hungary as well, when he received Endre Hamvas and Pál Brezanóczy, who had traveled to attend his coronation, in a private audience on July 3, 1963. During the meeting, eventually stretching to 20 minutes instead of the originally scheduled 15, the pope assured the Hungarian clerics that, knowing Casaroli's report, he himself approved of continuing negotiations.¹⁴⁶

Based on Paul VI's above declaration, it is also an obvious fact that the pope later approved the decisions taken at the select meeting of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs on July 16, 1963. The cardinals present at that gathering unanimously consented to continuing the negotiations and accepted the provision that the venue for the talks, at which Casaroli would continue to represent the Holy See, should alternate between Budapest and Rome. It was designating the main guidelines that represented the true difficulty. Although a consensus emerged that in the negotiations all the points contained in both the *nota verbale* and the list secretly handed to Casaroli by Hamvas in Vienna on April 29, 1963¹⁴⁷ must remain on the agenda, when it came to prioritizing the individual topics to be discussed, the bishops' opinions diverged. In his closing remarks, therefore, Secretary of State Cicognani recommended that at the next round of negotiations the Holy See's representative should take into account the various arguments raised at the meeting. This recommendation, accepted by all the bishops, meant in practice that Casaroli was given a quite free hand: when shaping a negotiating strategy in essence it would be up to him which bishops' positions he would favor. In fact, he was permitted to act in the spirit of that which Cardinal Ferdinando Cento articulated thus: "The criterion to be followed during the conduct of negotiations [...] is that 'which has always guided Vatican diplomacy: that is, to yield in that which may be conceded; to remain steadfast in that which concerns the essence of the Church. It is difficult to go into particulars; the delegates of the Holy See will know how to apply this criterion from case to case.'"¹⁴⁸

1.4.2. *The partial agreement of 1964*

Based on the authorization he was given, Casaroli negotiated with the representatives of the Hungarian government in three rounds until the signing of the partial agreement of 1964: first, between October 1 and 5, 1963 in Rome; next, instead of November 1963 as originally scheduled, between March 13 and 24, 1964 in Budapest; and finally, between June 9 and 14, 1964, once more in Rome. By the time of these last negotiations the documents were practically ready, and were signed after the pope had given his formal approval, on September 15, 1964 in Budapest.¹⁴⁹ In the course of the negotiations, of the 12 topics the Holy See had placed on the agenda during the first meeting in May, in reality only on two questions could concrete results be achieved.¹⁵⁰

In the area of episcopal appointments the Holy See was forced to retreat.¹⁵¹ After 1945 the Vatican regarded the *intesa semplice* signed with the Hungarian government in 1927, which regulated the procedures for appointments, to have lost its validity and therefore attempted to assert the principle of the pope's right to freely appoint bishops. However, after Vatican initiatives aimed at ensuring the replacement of the hierarchy ended in failure during the 1950s for having failed to take into account the state's demands requiring its prior approval, the need to find a practical settlement of the issue was raised more and more seriously. The first step towards a compromise solution was the above described proposal of the *nota verbale* drafted in December 1962. However, aware of its more advantageous negotiating position, the Hungarian government did not content itself with the concessions offered by the Holy See: recognizing that the Vatican regarded the securing of the hierarchy as its most urgent task,¹⁵² it saw a possibility of fully asserting its interests. In fact the Holy See out of pastoral considerations (namely, because to provide certain sacraments consecrated bishops were needed) regarded the renewal of the aging Hungarian episcopate to be such an urgent task that in the end it was willing to accept a solution which, while formally not violating the canonical principle of free papal appointment, in practice guaranteed the state authority a decisive influence in the selection of candidates nonetheless.¹⁵³

A concrete solution was also reached regarding the oath the bishops were to take to the constitution of the Hungarian People's Republic. Through an exchange of letters with the president of the Hungarian Bench of Bishops and the chairman of the ÁEH it was clarified that the taking of the oath by church

figures must be interpreted with the proviso “sicut decet.”¹⁵⁴ For the Holy See, however, this question did not have nearly the significance that filling the episcopal sees had. In reality, it had been included on the proposed agenda only out of tactical considerations. As early as 1959 a permissive attitude in evaluating the oath of loyalty had won out within the Secretariat of State. Casaroli’s bargaining position was weakened, however, by the fact that from the beginning the Hungarian side also was aware the Holy See sought to use the leniency it showed in this matter as a tactical device. Thanks to the agent of the *rezidentura* in Rome, codenamed “Amadeo,” the leaders of Hungarian church policy already knew the Secretariat of State’s aforementioned position of 1959. Thus, during the negotiations the Holy See did not succeed in asserting its original intention of obtaining concessions from the Hungarian state in other areas in exchange for the willingness to compromise it displayed regarding the loyalty oath.¹⁵⁵

The Holy See attributed almost as much significance to ensuring the possibility of maintaining ties in some form or another between the Hungarian Church and Rome as it did to supplementing the hierarchy. Free communication was urged first of all in the interests of preserving the unity of the Catholic Church, but the Vatican’s need to become informed about the Hungarian Church was also an essential criterion. They sought to assert the two aspects, which were difficult to separate from one another, on the one hand by securing more frequent visits to Rome by the Hungarian bishops, and on the other hand by sending, at least temporarily, an apostolic visitor or some Vatican representative with diplomatic immunity to Hungary.

The Hungarian government, although it testified to a certain willingness to compromise both by permitting the attendance of a larger number of Hungarian prelates to attend the Council, allowing the Hungarian Church to maintain ties with the Vatican offices independently of the Council. In reality, however, it continued to grant approval to travel outside the country only in accordance with the regime’s interests. Nevertheless, for the Holy See this partial success also was valuable. Even if it could not rely on the information that it gained from the bishops who were loyal, or at least not hostile, to the state authorities without reservations, it attempted to utilize the personal meetings to reinforce the Hungarian prelates’ loyalty to Rome and encourage them where possible to show more courageous behavior.¹⁵⁶

It has already been pointed out in the analysis of the circumstances surrounding the origin of the *nota verbale* presented to the Hungarian bishops in December 1962 that the proposal to send an apostolic visitor had been guided in part by the Holy See's intention to gain information about the situation of the Hungarian Church not merely through bishops allowed out of the country by the regime. The Hungarian side, however, not only rejected this request but also heavily restricted the opportunity of the members of the Vatican negotiating delegation in Hungary to obtain information when it stipulated with whom they could and could not speak. Already on May 7, 1963, at the start of the first meeting with Casaroli they immediately made clear: "You may not utilize your stay in Hungary to control the affairs of the Hungarian Church, or consult with various ecclesiastical figures. Before and during the negotiations with the government's delegate you may maintain contact with Bishop Hamvas and Apostolic Administrator Brezanóczy who are participating in the preparations for the negotiations."¹⁵⁷

The minutes of the negotiations reveal that it was precisely the secrecy of the talks that contributed decisively to the failure of the Holy See's attempt to obtain information from multiple sources. The demand to keep contacts secret in fact soon proved a vicious circle for the Vatican. With the Communist regimes the Holy See preferred to use secret diplomacy, because it was aware from the start that it could achieve only partial results during the negotiations and feared that making news of the talks public and the ensuing reception in the press would initiate a firestorm that would threaten even the anticipated partial successes.¹⁵⁸ By citing the mutual demand to keep relations secret, however, the Hungarian government could easily achieve complete control over the Vatican negotiating delegation¹⁵⁹ and narrow the circle of persons who could be visited. Thus, by accepting this, the Holy See deprived itself precisely of that information, with which, if it had possessed it, it could have warded off the Hungarian side's attempts at disinformation more successfully, and thereby might have achieved more beneficial partial results for the Church in certain cases.

With respect to the anticipated results of the negotiations, it was perhaps in the area of increasing the Church's freedom of administration that the Secretariat of State was most aware of its own limitations. For this reason, during the negotiations Casaroli set himself the goal primarily of defending at least the basic principle of the Church's internal freedom. Although aware

that recalling the ministerial commissioners from the episcopal residences would not bring about a significant change in the practical sphere (since even without them the government “was left with a thousand means of controlling and exerting pressure”¹⁶⁰), he considered the Church’s internal freedom to be a question of principle so important that he linked the signing of the agreement to the granting of the demanded—even if symbolic—concession.¹⁶¹ In defense of the principle the Holy See was prepared even to fulfill the condition raised by the government: a letter was addressed to Lajos Shvoy, the bishop of Székesfehérvár who steadfastly refused to cooperate with the government, asking him to show a more understanding attitude towards the government.¹⁶²

Having succeeded in having the last two ministerial commissioners recalled,¹⁶³ Casaroli also attempted to increase the bishops’ freedom to govern their dioceses. Despite emphasizing that the Holy See *de jure* still did not recognize the state’s demand to have a say, as laid out in Legal Edict No. 22 of 1957, he pressed for a precise wording of the criteria applied in implementing the decree and the justification for rejecting the episcopal dispositions. On this issue, however, he failed to achieve a significant result, and in the agreement recorded only the two sides’ positions.¹⁶⁴

Closely linked to the practical settlement of the procedure for episcopal appointments was the question of the impeded bishops. In this area, however, the Holy See similarly managed to achieve only a minimal, partial result. In the cases of Bishops Bertalan Badalik and József Pétery, those in charge of Hungarian church policy only permitted them to leave the episcopal summer residence in Hejce, and instead of their previous forced confinement, to freely take up residence—outside of their dioceses. In the cases of the other impeded bishops (Mihály Endrey, János Bárd), as well as those appointed but not consecrated (Gellért Belon and József Winkler) the leadership in Hungary granted its prior consent solely to Winkler’s appointment as auxiliary bishop of Szombathely. The Hungarian side firmly rejected the appointments of Endrey and Bárd as diocesan bishops, holding out the prospect of permitting them to function at most as auxiliary bishops. As for Belon, in his case not even this much could be achieved.¹⁶⁵

As for the topics raised by the Holy See, the negotiations brought about practically no results whatsoever: the partial agreement confined itself only to presenting the two sides’ positions. Regarding the matter of priests who

were imprisoned or prevented from performing their duties, as well as the issues of pastoral care, seminary education and freedom of religious education, one of the main causes of the failure is to be sought in the Holy See's lack of sufficient information concerning each subject. It made no difference that the Vatican had knowledge of irregularities, abuses and restrictions occurring in the above-named areas, because as a rule it was unable to buttress its allegations with adequate examples. The objections raised often were based on earlier incidents.¹⁶⁶ These the Hungarian side could easily parry by claiming that the situation had been resolved in the meantime. It did happen that the Holy See fell victim to deliberate acts of disinformation.¹⁶⁷ Moreover, lacking local knowledge and background information, the Holy See's emissaries were insufficiently prepared to be able to point out the distortions inherent in the replies given by the Hungarian side to specifically named grievances.¹⁶⁸ Nonetheless, it was not due to lack of information that the Vatican failed to obtain authorization for the religious orders and have church objections concerning the peace priest movement taken into account: the main obstacle to closing the gap between the two positions can be traced back to the conflict of principles and interests between the two sides.

The Mindszenty affair occupied a peculiar place in the prehistory of the 1964 partial agreement. Although the Holy See had held consultations with the United States already in the period prior to the Council and had taken steps to permit the Hungarian cardinal to take part in the Council,¹⁶⁹ in reality it was only during the first session that it began to form its position on the issue. In this process it was not just the difficulty of coordinating the interests of the four parties concerned (Hungary, the Holy See, the United States and, last but not least, the cardinal himself) that caused problems.¹⁷⁰ The clash of divergent positions within the Holy See as well as the articulation of a variety of opinions regarding a solution to the matter further complicated the situation.

At first Pope John XXIII had wished to resolve the Hungarian cardinal's case as soon as possible in conjunction with the Council.¹⁷¹ However, after the Secretariat of State learned the Hungarian government's position, which contained quite considerable demands,¹⁷² through the intermediation of Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád, Secretary of State Cicognani no longer saw any possibility of rapidly settling the issue. At the time of the handover of the *nota verbale* he had emphasized in front of the Hungarian bishops that the

resolution to the matter belonged to the second phase of the negotiations.¹⁷³ Due partly to the Hungarian position, and partly the recognition that the presence of the conservative Hungarian prelate at Vatican II, working in the spirit of *aggiornamento*, could not be regarded as desirable, the pope himself altered his earlier stance and decided to gather additional information.¹⁷⁴

König's and later Casaroli's trip to Budapest made it possible to learn Mindszenty's position. This confirmed the earlier assessment that to the issue would require a quite complex solution, and thus it would be better to begin the negotiations with other items. Nevertheless, in this phase of the negotiations the Holy See treated it as self-evident truth that without a resolution to the Mindszenty affair a final agreement could not be reached.¹⁷⁵ At the same time, two recommendations about negotiating strategy were outlined at the meeting of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs on July 16, 1963. In contrast to the opinion of Cardinals Fernando Cento and Gustavo Testa, who argued in favor of Mindszenty coming to Rome as soon as possible, Cardinals Giuseppe Pizzardo and Alfredo Ottaviani, and Secretary of State Amleto Cicognani himself (actually in agreement with both Mindszenty's own assessment of his situation as well as König's position) regarded the Hungarian cardinal as a "valuable commodity" and for this reason they believed sufficient compensation must be expected for resolving his case.¹⁷⁶

Right up until the round of negotiations of March 1964 Casaroli conducted the negotiations based on the premise that without resolving the Mindszenty question it would not be possible to reach an accord with the Hungarian government. He regarded the lack of interest in the cardinal's case shown by his negotiating partners (as we shall see, not completely without grounds) as a tactical move, and in his assessment of the situation, the problem in reality was more important to the Hungarian People's Republic. Taking this as his starting point, and taking into account the arguments made at the meeting of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, he attempted to request as many concessions as possible in exchange for resolving the cardinal's case.¹⁷⁷ He similarly assessed the recommendation, made by the Hungarian side during the negotiations of March 1964 that Mindszenty's case—because of its difficulty—be treated separately from the other questions, as another tactical move. However, in view of the complexity of the question, and in order to be able to put into

effect the successes achieved in the case of the other items as soon as possible, Casaroli considered this proposal acceptable.¹⁷⁸ Thus, at the time the partial agreement was drafted the Holy See in the end did not play the Mindszenty card. In fact, by postponing a solution to the case the Vatican may have further weakened its bargaining position instead.

The limited success of the Vatican–Hungarian negotiations was indicated by the diplomatic classification of the documents signed on September 15, 1964. The Holy See did not choose the form of a *modus vivendi* widespread in ecclesiastical practice, because it usually signed agreements of this kind only in cases where there was complete consensus on all essential questions. On the contrary, through the formula of the gentlemen's agreement the Holy See declared that it was by no means entirely satisfied with the results achieved, and numerous topics important to the Church can be found among the questions left open, as well.¹⁷⁹

Nevertheless, from the start the Holy See was aware that significant results could not be expected from the negotiations with the Communist regimes.¹⁸⁰ Stemming from its mission, however, even despite the foreseeable forced compromises it considered it its obligation to make every attempt to improve the situation of the oppressed churches. According to the appraisal of the Secretariat of State, it gave cause for certain hope that based on the first contacts it appeared the Hungarian government also had an interest in the negotiations in spite of the unbridgeable ideological differences, since a resolution to the Mindszenty question and the filling of the vacant episcopal sees would attest to normal conditions in ecclesiastical policy. The very fact of the negotiations with the Holy See in and of itself would strengthen the Hungarian government's international position, and cooperation in the cause of peace, so dear to the Communist regimes, would likewise be possible.¹⁸¹

Thus, the fact that the Holy See, intent on improving the Church's dire situation, could hope to find some common denominator with the Hungarian government in two areas regarded as crucial spoke in favor of the negotiations, however trifling the results they promised. That the new Hungarian ecclesiastical policy, which anticipated the survival of the churches in the longer term, by itself now had an interest in filling the episcopal sees,¹⁸² could serve as a basis for rejuvenating the aging hierarchy. Having judged the long-term postponement of the solution to the question as risky, and not seeing the formation of a secret hierarchy as a realistic alternative either,¹⁸³ the Holy

See judged it necessary to accept the compromise solution that presented itself in this area of priority. No matter how interested it was in filling the episcopal sees, however, the Holy See still attempted to preserve its freedom to maneuver: for the time being it thought it better maintain the transitional situation, and continued to appoint exclusively *ad nutum* apostolic administrators to the vacant posts.¹⁸⁴

In addition to the issue of episcopal appointments, the Hungarian government's need to use the negotiations to increase its international prestige brought about a quite important change for the Holy See in yet another area. Through its willingness to negotiate the "government openly acknowledged the Holy See's competence to deal with the religious affairs of the Hungarian people and take decisions on them. It appears to me that at the same time this is also a general question of no trifling importance if we recall those statements and actions witnessed in the past and recent past, which were meant to prove that freedom of conscience and religion, and the associational life of citizens, whether with devotional or other similar aims, are all internal political affairs in which no external voice or power—including here the Holy See as well—has a right to intervene."¹⁸⁵ The (*de facto*) recognition of the Holy See's competence at the same time not only ranked as a serious achievement in and of itself, but indirectly it also meant for the Vatican a kind of safeguard that it would not have to face the danger of a national Church separated from Rome.

However, the ideological antagonism between the two sides not only made it obvious from the start that one could not nurture exaggerated hopes for the prospective results. The ideological differences hindered both the negotiations themselves and effective argumentation. Casaroli repeatedly confronted both the ambiguity of Marxist dialectics and the tendentious nature of the Hungarian side's pronouncements. The Vatican envoy found, for example, the text of the minutes of the talks held in October 1963 prepared by the Hungarian side to be so "obscure," "imprecise" and indeed, often "expressly tendentious," that he did not consider it acceptable even as a base text.¹⁸⁶ The ambiguous use of words, in turn, is well demonstrated by the reply Casaroli received when he mentioned that according to his knowledge there were some 1,000 priests in Hungary who were not allowed to perform priestly duties (*sacerdoti che non esercitano le funzioni sacerdotali*). Although it is clear from the wording that Casaroli had in mind

those priests to whom the state had not granted permission to function, the Hungarian government's representative interpreted the question narrowly and spoke of the number of suspended priests merely from the point of view of canon law: "We include in the category of suspended priests (*sacerdoti sospesi*) those who out of political, moral or economic reasons have come into conflict with the law, and therefore have been suspended by their bishops. Their number may be put at around twenty."¹⁸⁷ What makes the incident particularly interesting is that nothing in our sources indicates that Casaroli mentioned this distortion.¹⁸⁸ The report drafted for the Politburo states outright that the Holy See's representative accepted the Hungarian side's "adequate reply."¹⁸⁹ This is all the more surprising because—by his own admission—Casaroli believed the only way to ward off the dangers of the Communists' peculiar "wordplay" was to strive for "sobriety" when expressing the Holy See's satisfaction and declare their reservations and attempt to clarify the concepts used in the area of law.¹⁹⁰

The signing of the partial agreement met with a mixed reception in the Church. The majority of council fathers received the concordat favorably and considered it forward-looking and cause for hope. However, skeptical, critical voices were not lacking either.¹⁹¹ Critics of the agreements did not question primarily the necessity of the negotiations either. Rather, they objected that with the partial results accepted the goal originally set was not achieved: improving the situation of the Hungarian Church. They attributed the failure in part to the above described negotiating strategy, which treated the filling of the episcopal sees as a higher priority than ensuring the Church's internal freedom.

The events following the signing of the accord also supported those opinions that cited the lack of guarantees and the unreliability of the Communist negotiating partners.¹⁹² The latest arrests and the prevailing practice of severely restricting religious freedom showed that the situation of the Hungarian Church did not improve after the agreement, but actually worsened. Moreover, it did not matter that during the subsequent negotiations the Holy See mentioned the complaints coming in, since, in lieu of specific information about each case, it continued to be subject to the attempted manipulations of the Hungarian negotiating partners.¹⁹³

Despite the Holy See's concern, Casaroli did attempt to defend the agreement, maintaining that, in spite of the difficulties, the accord brought

about more positives than negatives.¹⁹⁴ Yet he, too, conceded that in lieu of appropriate guarantees, or at least a thorough knowledge of the facts, there was little chance of asserting the Church's interests. For this reason, he considered the gathering of information on the scene to be the most pressing issue, and it was no coincidence that during the ongoing negotiations he repeatedly pushed for the possibility of a semi-official Vatican delegate with diplomatic immunity regularly visiting Hungary. For the time being, however, the Hungarian government gave only evasive replies to this proposal.¹⁹⁵

Notes

- ¹ O'Malley, *What Happened*, 157–59; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. II, 14–18, 343–44; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. III, 34–37; Martina, *Storia della Chiesa*, 312, 319.
- ² On the various alignments see O'Malley, *What Happened*, 102, 108–26; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. II, 78–80, 194–221; Martina, *Storia della Chiesa*, 309.
- ³ Cf. Martina, *Storia della Chiesa*, 308.
- ⁴ O'Malley, *What Happened*, 108; Martina, *Storia della Chiesa*, 310, 321, 334.
- ⁵ Wiedenhofer, “Ekklesiologie,” 85–86, 90–91; and Philips, “Deux tendances,” 225–38.
- ⁶ Wiedenhofer, “Ekklesiologie,” 90–91.
- ⁷ Especially the conciliar resolution *Christus Dominus*; cf. Erdő: “Christus Dominus,” 161–98.
- ⁸ *History of Vatican II*, Vol. III, 35.
- ⁹ Yves Congar’s formulation is quoted in Zizola, *Giovanni XXIII*, 9.
- ¹⁰ O'Malley, *What Happened*, 8–13, 112–16; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. IV, 617–20; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. V, 91, 544–45, 581, 609–11.
- ¹¹ Nemeshegyi, “Dignitatis humanae,” 384.
- ¹² *History of Vatican II*, Vol. V, 451–57.
- ¹³ *History of Vatican II*, Vol. III, 268–71. On the history of the document’s origins and the various versions of the text, see Becker, “Dekret über den Ökumenismus,” 11–39.
- ¹⁴ Cf. *History of Vatican II*, Vol. IV, 620; Kránitz and Hafenscher, “Unitatis redintegratio,” 139.
- ¹⁵ *History of Vatican II*, Vol. V, 230–31. On the history of the document’s origins, see Oesterreicher, “Erklärung,” 406–78.
- ¹⁶ The debates concerning the genre of “pastoral constitutions” are summarized in *History of Vatican II*, Vol. IV, 602–604.

- ¹⁷ The contested nature of the topics is well indicated by the fact that during the votes between November 15 and 17, 1965 the most contrary votes were cast on these questions; it was these that elicited the greatest number of proposed amendments, and in the votes held on the *expensio modorum* once again it was these that received the most contrary votes. Moeller, "Pastorale Konstitution," 275–76.
- ¹⁸ In the opening address John XXIII emphasized that the Council must be characterized by a pastoral spirit and thus its task was not to condemn errors: the world's problems must be remedied rather "with mercy, than with severity" and foremost "with the strength of its teaching," instead of solving problems with condemnatory pronouncements. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. I, *Pars I*, 172.
- ¹⁹ Turbanti, "Problema del comunismo," 164.
- ²⁰ *Ibid.*, 182–83.
- ²¹ Moeller, "Pastorale Konstitution," 276; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. V, 171–77 and 419–421; O'Malley, *What Happened*, 266–67.
- ²² Moeller, "Pastorale Konstitution," 261.
- ²³ Martina, *Storia della Chiesa*, 324.
- ²⁴ Joannis PP. XXIII, "Litterae encyclicae *Pacem in Terris* de pace omnium gentium in veritate, iustitia, caritate, libertate constituenda." *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 55 (1963): 257–304, no. 158. For the text of the encyclical in English, see *Encyclicals and Other Messages of John XXIII*, 327–73.
- ²⁵ *Pacem in Terris*, no. 159. When distinguishing between philosophical principles and the historical formations arisen on their basis John XXIII took as his starting point the centuries-long experience of church history: although the French Revolution, or the philosophical theories of the Enlightenment condemned by the Church remained erroneous, the historical formations that came into existence on the basis of philosophical principles over the centuries had abandoned their initial destructive fanaticism and had been purified. In a similar way he regarded Communism also as a wild offshoot of modern ideological currents, and presumed that with the passage of time its radicalism and destructive force would abate. On this, cf. Luxmoore and Babiuch, *Vatican and the Red Flag*, 125–26.
- ²⁶ *Pacem in Terris*, no. 160.
- ²⁷ Cf. Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 72–75. The pope in addition pointed out that it was precisely the joint action of Catholics and persons holding other worldviews that could provide an occasion for conversion to the truth: "Today, maybe, a man lacks faith and turns aside into error; tomorrow, perhaps, illumined by God's light, he may indeed embrace the truth," *Pacem in Terris*, no. 158.
- ²⁸ Nonetheless, in *Pacem in Terris* John XXIII too refers to the complexity of the relationship between the Church and Communism, when, having presented the

basic principles ensuring the possibility of cooperation, he remains cautious in the area of practical guidance: “[...] whether or not the moment for such cooperation has arrived, and the manner and degree of such co-operation in the attainment of economic, social, cultural and political advantages—these are matters for prudence to decide; prudence, the queen of all the virtues which rule the lives of men both as individuals and in society,” *Pacem in Terris* no. 160.

- ²⁹ Cf. Cardinal Giovanni Battista Montini’s remarks in the Council’s preparatory commission on the issue of Communism (May 4, 1962): *Acta et documenta. Series II*, Vol. II, *Pars III*, 1968), 770–71. The remarks are summarized in Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 77–79.
- ³⁰ “Summi Pontificis Pauli VI. allocutio” (September 29, 1963), *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. II, *Pars I*, 183–200.
- ³¹ Cf. Luxmoore and Babiuch, *Vatican and the Red Flag*, 154–55.
- ³² König, *Haus*, 170.
- ³³ *History of Vatican II*, Vol. III, 449.
- ³⁴ Paulus PP. VI, “Litterae Encyclicae *Ecclesiam Suam*: quibus viis Catholicam Ecclesiam in praesenti munus suum exsequi oporteat.” *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 56 (1964): 609–59, no. 97–98. For the text in English: *Ecclesiam Suam: The Paths of the Church*.
- ³⁵ *Ecclesiam Suam*, no. 72.
- ³⁶ *Ecclesiam Suam*, no. 72.
- ³⁷ *Ecclesiam Suam*, no. 109.
- ³⁸ “Omelia di Papa Paolo VI alle Catacombe di Domitilla” (September 12, 1965), published in Paolo VI, *Encicliche e discorsi*. Vol. VII, 84–88. Cf. also Lill, “Zur Vatikanischen Ostpolitik,” 22–23; Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 98–99; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. V, 21.
- ³⁹ Cf. Melloni, “Ostpolitik,” 226–33.
- ⁴⁰ The grouping of conservative-minded bishops attending the Second Vatican Council.
- ⁴¹ Paul VI’s memorandum is published in Carbone, “Schemi e discussioni,” 182.
- ⁴² Turbanti, “Problema del comunismo,” 183. What was said at the conference convoked by the pope is discussed in detail by Carbone, “Schemi e discussioni,” 56–59.
- ⁴³ Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 101–102.
- ⁴⁴ Cf. Riccardi, *Vaticano e Mosca*, 246, 290; Luxmoore and Babiuch, *Vatican and the Red Flag*, 115.

- ⁴⁵ This was the general opinion despite the fact that Pius XII from the beginning had striven to make the Holy See independent from international political blocs; cf. Di Nolfo, "Le Vatican," 395–412; Chenaux, *Pie XII*, 348.
- ⁴⁶ Lill, "Zur Vatikanischen Ostpolitik," 21.
- ⁴⁷ Cf. Hürten, "Was heißt Vatikanische Ostpolitik?" 15.
- ⁴⁸ Neither participation in international aid campaigns to relieve the famine resulting from the Civil War, nor the Vatican memorandum addressed to the 1922 World Economic Conference in Genoa, which urged that freedom of conscience and religion and the return of the religious associations' properties be set as conditions for offering economic aid, brought about the expected results. Cf. Stehle, *Ostpolitik*, 43–55; and Hürten, "Was heißt Vatikanische Ostpolitik?" 2–3. Providing indirect economic aid aimed at supporting the Catholic Church beginning in the 1960s played once again a (subordinate) role in the Holy See's eastern policy. For example, the Hungarian government also did not object to the aid streaming into Hungary through *Caritas Internationalis*, as long as the aid was given for a defined purpose and not tied to conditions. Cf. Memorandum on the international material support to the Hungarian Catholic Church. Budapest, December 11, 1964. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1964/15. ő. e. 120–22.
- ⁴⁹ Cf. Stehle, *Ostpolitik*, 132–41; Hürten, "Was heißt Vatikanische Ostpolitik?" 3.
- ⁵⁰ Hürten, "Was heißt Vatikanische Ostpolitik?" 3–4.
- ⁵¹ Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 89. At the same time, the increase in the Holy See's international authority, and gaining acceptance for it, was one of the preconditions for the success of the Vatican's eastern policy; cf. Lill, "Zur Vatikanischen Ostpolitik," 21.
- ⁵² Lill, "Zur Vatikanischen Ostpolitik," 20–21. Particularly noteworthy in this context is the Holy See's participation in the conferences on consular relations (Vienna); Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 372.
- ⁵³ Luxmoore and Babiuch, *Vatican and the Red Flag*, 125. This same is emphasized by Mackiewicz, *In the Shadow*, 47–55.
- ⁵⁴ This is emphasized by Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 56.
- ⁵⁵ Its first classic formulation is Pope Benedict XV's appeal for peace addressed to the warring sides on August 1, 1917. See Benedictus PP. XV, "Quarto ineunte bellorum anno ad moderatores populorum belligerantium adhortatio" (August 1, 1917), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 9 (1917): 417–23.
- ⁵⁶ This is especially emphasized by Mackiewicz, *In the Shadow*, 48–50.
- ⁵⁷ For more on John XXIII's role in the Cuban Missile Crisis, with somewhat different emphases, see *History of Vatican II*, Vol. II, 94–104; Melloni, *Altra Roma*, 130–36.

- ⁵⁸ Woolner and Kurial, *FDR, the Vatican*, 258–59.
- ⁵⁹ “Discorso del Papa Giovanni XXIII ai pellegrini portoghesi” (October 24, 1962), in *Discorsi, messaggi, colloqui*, Vol. 4, 860–61.
- ⁶⁰ “Nuntius Radiophonicus ad universas gentes summosque earum Moderatores missus” (October 25, 1962), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 54 (1962): 861–62.
- ⁶¹ The role of the papal message is emphasized above all on the basis of Cousins, *Improbable Triumvirate*. See especially Melloni, *Altra Roma*, 135–36. Criticized in Pastorelli, *Santa Sede*, 82–83.
- ⁶² Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 68. In Kennedy’s case, at least, he considers this interpretation also conceivable.
- ⁶³ *Pravda*, October 26, 1962, 5. For the English translation of the entire article, see *History of Vatican II*, Vol. II., 98.
- ⁶⁴ Cf. *Ibid.*, 103.
- ⁶⁵ Stehle, *Ostpolitik*, 340; Zizola, *Giovanni XXIII*, 215–22; Melloni, *Altra Roma*, 164–166; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. II, 560.
- ⁶⁶ The Balzan Fund, established in 1961 from the legacy of the Italian-born journalist and entrepreneur Eugenio Balzan, awarded prizes in the cultural and scientific areas as well as in recognition of activity performed for peace and understanding among peoples. On the awarding of the peace prize, see Mackiewicz, *In the Shadow*, 115–16.
- ⁶⁷ For the most detailed accounts of the Adzhubei visit see Zizola, *Giovanni XXIII*, 228–42; and Trasatti, *Vatican–Kremlin*, 225–32. Cf. on this also: Stehle, *Ostpolitik*, 344; Riccardi, *Vaticano e Mosca*, 248–49; Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 70–71; Mackiewicz, *In the Shadow*, 116–19.
- ⁶⁸ Cf. *History of Vatican II*, Vol. V, 499. Already during John XXIII’s lifetime, during the Council’s first session the Secretariat of State was conducting the negotiations with the bishops from the countries of the Socialist Bloc: “Minuta di Pienza per la Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari.” November 27, 1962, in Barberini, *La politica*, 25–36.
- ⁶⁹ Melloni, *Altra Roma*, 195–96.
- ⁷⁰ Paul VI to an even greater degree than John XXIII assigned dialogue with the Communist world to the competence of diplomats. Trust in diplomacy and cunning diplomatic sense were inherent traits of Paul VI; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. IV, 612–13; Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 97.
- ⁷¹ Paulus PP. VI, “Allocutio in Consilio Nationum Unitarum” (October 4, 1965), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 57 (1965): 877–85. As a conciliar document: “Allocutio Summi Pontificis Pauli VI in Consilio Nationum Unitarum,” *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. IV, *Pars I*, 28–36.

⁷² *History of Vatican II*, Vol. V, 392–94.

⁷³ As was indicated above, the private audience John XXIII granted to Aleksei Adzhubei can be regarded only as an informal meeting, since Adzhubei was not a politician but a journalist. At the same time, the fact that the editor-in-chief of *Izvestiia* was also Khrushchev's son-in-law, also lent significance to this first meeting. Although the possibility of a summit between John XXIII and Khrushchev was raised following the Adzhubei visit, in the end this did not take place. On this, cf. "Appunto, non firmato, sulla possibile visita di Kruscev in Vaticano. 8 marzo 1963," in Barberini, *La politica*, 785–86.

⁷⁴ Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 101–102; Riccardi, *Vaticano e Mosca*, 275.

⁷⁵ *Ibid.*, 288.

⁷⁶ On the Nikodim–Tisserant meeting and Willebrands's trip to Moscow, see Stehle, *Ostpolitik*, 337; Riccardi, *Vaticano e Mosca*, 278–84; Mackiewicz, *In the Shadow*, 89–93. Andrea Riccardi argues that in no way could Tisserant have given such a formal guarantee, whereby he would have restricted the Council's freedom. According to the author this most likely would have been a presentation of the Council's pastoral intentions, which ruled out the pronouncement of anathemas. By contrast, Mackiewicz evaluates what was said at the meeting as the offer of an actual guarantee.

⁷⁷ Gromyko later claimed that he, too, had once met with John XXIII, but we have no data confirming this. Cf. Riccardi, *Vaticano e Mosca*, 283–84.

⁷⁸ *Ibid.*, 295–96.

⁷⁹ *History of Vatican II*, Vol. V, 532–34. On the other hand, the building of ecumenical ties and an international presence was quite important to the Moscow Patriarchate. It formed part of a strategic overture within which they attempted to strengthen the Russian Orthodox Church's domestic position with the importance of its foreign-policy activity. This sums up the church-policy *ars poetica* of Metropolitan Nikodim, who closely cooperated with the Soviet authorities.

⁸⁰ According to Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 91, to attain the pastoral goals the realization of the following three criteria were regarded as indispensable: ensuring the pope's authority and leading role; placement of bishops at the head of the dioceses; and finally free communication between the bishops and the Vatican.

⁸¹ Report of agent "Amadeo" on the preparations of the Ecumenical Council (July 21, 1959). ÁBTL 3.2.3. Mt-764/4. "Amadeo," 157–58.

⁸² E.g., "According to Hamvas the Vatican tends to prefer negotiating with the Hungarian government and to use the bishops, and him, only as advisors." Report of the IM. Budapest, November 12, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0037-23/1963.

⁸³ No bishop arrived at Vatican II from Lithuania, though the Soviet authorities did permit a *peritus* to travel to Rome. Cf. "Minuta di Ponzona per la Congregazione

- per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. 17 novembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 29–33.
- ⁸⁴ Cf. Summary report on the main characteristics of the present Vatican policy. Budapest, May 27, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7–a. “Canale,” 236–75.
- ⁸⁵ Cf. “Minuta di Pienza per la Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. 17 novembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 31.
- ⁸⁶ Cf. “Pienza per la Sacra Congregazione degli Affari ecclesiastici Straordinari (trattative con Ungheria e Cecoslovacchia). 16 luglio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 79–80.
- ⁸⁷ Cf. Fejérdy, “Szocialista tömb,” 216, note 22; and “Minuta di Pienza per la Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. 27 novembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 25.
- ⁸⁸ The Hungarian bishops arrived in Rome on October 6, 1962. The Holy Father’s message, in which he invited them to a private audience on October 9 at noon, arrived at their lodgings on October 8. Cf. *Új Ember*, October 28, 1962. In an interview given to *Új Ember* Hamvas erroneously stated that they had arrived at the Council on October 8. The erroneous date was adopted by Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 359. For the official report of the papal audience, see *L’Osservatore Romano*, October 10, 1962, 1.
- ⁸⁹ Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 359.
- ⁹⁰ Report on the experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 6, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 141.
- ⁹¹ “Minuta di Pienza per la Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. 17 novembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 34–35.
- ⁹² Information report on the Council. Budapest, November 30, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 326–27.
- ⁹³ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli sugli incontri con i rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (con cinque Allegati). Vaticano, 18 maggio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 58.
- ⁹⁴ A good example of this manner of verification based on knowledge of human nature is Secretary of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs Antonio Samorè’s memorandum on his discussions with Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád on November 11, 1962: Hamvas “despite a certain weakness stemming from his nature appeared to me sincere and basically well-meaning.” “Appunto di Mons. Samorè su un colloquio con Mons. Hamvas. 13 novembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 23.
- ⁹⁵ Cf. Report on the experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 6, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 141.

- ⁹⁶ Cf. Memorandum on the dispatch no. 2214 from Rome. Budapest, September 30, 1963. ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs-2/2. "Hontalanok," 183–84.
- ⁹⁷ Cf. Report on the operational work in Rome. Budapest, December 10, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 335; Report of agent "Kékes" on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. "Canale," 46–47.
- ⁹⁸ "Relazione di Mons. Casaroli su un colloquio di Mons. Zabkar con Mons. Brezanóczy, Amm. Ap. di Eger. 4 dicembre 1962," in Barberini, *La politica*, 37.
- ⁹⁹ Cf. the following reports: Report to D on the matter of "Arnold." Rome, October 31, 1962. ÁBTL 3.2.3. Mt-764/7; "Arnold," 110–11; and Report to D on the matter of "Arnold." Rome, November 16, 1962. ÁBTL 3.2.3. Mt-764/7. "Arnold," 137–38.
- ¹⁰⁰ Report of agent "Arnold" on his visit to Mons. Samorè on November 16, 1962. November 19, 1962. ÁBTL 3.2.3. Mt-764/7. "Arnold," 150.
- ¹⁰¹ Hungarian intelligence at this time began to have serious doubts about "Arnold's" sincerity: "[...] doubts arose as to whether 'Arnold' actually had received an assignment to this end from the Secretariat of State, or are these just things he made up." Report to D on the matter of 'Arnold'. Rome, November 16, 1962. ÁBTL 3.2.3. Mt-764/7. "Arnold," 137–38. The intelligence service later on could only verify that Florio Banfi actually had visited the Secretariat of State and forwarded the report to Samorè in the Vatican internal mail. Nevertheless they accepted the content of "Arnold's" account as true. Report on the matter of Arnold. Rome, January 17, 1963. ÁBTL 3.2.3. Mt-764/7. "Arnold," 196.
- ¹⁰² Report of agent "Arnold" on his visit to Mons. Samorè on November 16, 1962. November 19, 1962. ÁBTL 3.2.3. Mt-764/7. "Arnold," 151–52.
- ¹⁰³ Information report. Budapest, October 9, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 291–92. The information pertaining to the monitoring functions of the employees of the church-run *Domus Mariae* may perhaps allude to the Vatican's secret service activity; on this, cf. Report on the operational work in Rome. Budapest, December 10, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 335.
- ¹⁰⁴ Information report on the activities of the Italian counter-intelligence against the council fathers arriving from socialist countries. Budapest, October 19, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 304.
- ¹⁰⁵ Cf. Report on the operational work in Rome. Budapest, December 10, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 333–36; Report of agent "Kékes" on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. 46–47. On the methods and operation of the Italian secret service proportionately broad information is provided in addition: Summary material on the third session. (Uncomplete). ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. "Canale," 313–15, in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 181–83.

- ¹⁰⁶ “Minuta di Pienza per la Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. 27 novembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 29.
- ¹⁰⁷ *Ibid.*, 34–35.
- ¹⁰⁸ The minutes of the November 27, 1962 meeting of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs is not available. However, the topics discussed at the meeting can be reconstructed from the draft of the proposal serving as the basis of the discussion: “Minuta di Pienza per la Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. 27 novembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 35–36. As for the positive outcome of the decision of the debated issues, these are known partly from the subsequent practical measures and partly from a later account. See “Pienza per la Sacra Congregazione degli Affari ecclesiastici Straordinari (Trattative con Ungheria e Cecoslovacchia). 16 luglio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 78.
- ¹⁰⁹ “One can proceed and make use of the bishops who have arrived in Rome (to attend the Council), who presumably have been appointed by their governments; as a condition of the talks and the agreement, the necessary minimum must be observed,” “Pienza per la Sacra Congregazione degli Affari ecclesiastici Straordinari (Trattative con Ungheria e Cecoslovacchia). 16 luglio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 78.
- ¹¹⁰ The Lithuanian prelates were handed a quite brief memorandum on December 2, 1962. The memorandum handed to the Czechoslovak council fathers, dated December 7, 1962, tallies almost word for word with the document the Hungarian bishops received. The text of the two documents is published in Barberini, *La politica*, 81–82.
- ¹¹¹ For Cicognani’s verbal explanation see: Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTI 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 30–31.
- ¹¹² Cf. Memorandum on the January 8, 1963 meeting with the leaders of the Department of Church Affairs in the Czechoslovak Ministry of Education and Cultural Affairs Budapest, January 16, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0014–3/1963.
- ¹¹³ The exact text of the *nota verbale* is known only from the official Hungarian translation; see Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 69. Barberini does not publish the original Latin text but indicates only that the latter “substantially corresponds” to the document that the Secretariat of State handed to the Czechoslovak bishops; Barberini, *La politica*, 81. Based on comparison of the Hungarian translation and the Latin text of the document addressed to the Czechoslovak government, it can indeed be established that the text of the two notes apart from the last paragraph are identical.
- ¹¹⁴ Translation of the verbal note handed to the Hungarian prelates at the State Secretariat, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 69.

- ¹¹⁵ Cf. the argument contained in the draft of the recommendation prepared for the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, “Minuta di Pienza per la Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. 27 novembre 1962,” in *La politica*, 32–33; and the relevant information of the intelligence services: Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 30.
- ¹¹⁶ Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 31. Similarly: Memorandum of Pál Brezanóczy for the ÁEH on the Second Vatican Council. Eger, January 14, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. V–37–28/1962.
- ¹¹⁷ “Minuta di Pienza per la Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. 27 novembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 32–33.
- ¹¹⁸ Cf. “Sacra Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. Adunanza ristretta del 16. VII. 1963—Trattative con i Governi d’Ungheria e di Cecoslovacchia,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 87–89.
- ¹¹⁹ The Holy See incidentally examined the issue of the Hungarian bishops taking the oath already in 1959. Cf. “Amadeo” reports and the correspondence of the intelligence services: ÁBTL 3.2.3. Mt–764/ 4. “Amadeo,” 21–56., 75–103.
- ¹²⁰ “Promemoria sulle trattative fra Santa Sede e rappresentanti del governo ungherese (Roma, 1–5 ottobre 1963),” in Barberini, *La politica*, 93–94.
- ¹²¹ From the similar document handed to the Czechoslovak bishops we know that the translation “anti-Church activity” (*egyházellenességek*) was used to render the following Latin expression (likewise quite broad in meaning): “ea quae Ecclesiae adversantur,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 81.
- ¹²² Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 30. These topics incidentally had figured also in the proposal prepared for the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs already on November 27, 1962 on the basis of earlier information and the negotiations conducted with the Hungarian prelates attending the Council. On this, see: “Minuta di Pienza per la Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. 27 novembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 35–36.
- ¹²³ Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 30–31.
- ¹²⁴ “Minuta di Pienza per la Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. 27 novembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 34–35.
- ¹²⁵ *Ibid.*, 34–35.
- ¹²⁶ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli su un colloquio di Mons. Zabkar con Mons. Brezanóczy, Amm. Ap. di Eger,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 36–37; and Memorandum of Pál Brezanóczy for the ÁEH on the Second Vatican Council. Eger, January 14,

1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-28/1962. For more detail on this see: Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. “Canale,” 31.
- ¹²⁷ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli su un colloquio di Mons. Zabkar con Mons. Brezanóczy, Amm. Ap. di Eger,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 37–42.
- ¹²⁸ Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. “Canale,” 30–31. (My emphasis: A. F.)
- ¹²⁹ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli su un colloquio di Mons. Zabkar con Mons. Brezanóczy, Amm. Ap. di Eger,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 41; and Memorandum of Pál Brezanóczy for the ÁEH on the Second Vatican Council. Eger, January 14, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-28/1962.
- ¹³⁰ By sending the apostolic visitor the émigré priests presumably sought to neutralize the possible negative effects of the scheduled visit of König, viewed as too pliant, to Mindszenty; cf. Fejérdy, “Hontalanok,” 79.
- ¹³¹ This is the only substantive deviation from the almost identical Vatican document handed to the Czechoslovak bishops. “Promemoria consegnato agli Ecc.mi Ordinari di Cecoslovacchia in data 7 dicembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 81–82.
- ¹³² Information report on the Vatican *nota verbale*. Budapest, December 12, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 339–40.
- ¹³³ For the text of the message, see: *Discorsi, messaggi, colloqui*, Vol. 5, 498.
- ¹³⁴ *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1129.
- ¹³⁵ Minutes of the Politburo’s session of December 28, 1962. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 288. ő. e. 8–9.; Copy of the December 27, 1962 report of the embassy in Moscow. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-3/a/1963; Information report. Budapest, January 11, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. “Canale,” 25.
- ¹³⁶ Cicognani first inquired about the possibility of the special delegate requested by the Hungarian bishops traveling to Hungary on February 15, 1963. At first the State Office for Church Affairs recommended that Hamvas not respond. Next he was entrusted with drafting a reply letter to stall for time. This was the origin of Hamvas’s draft reply, in which the bishop of Csanád informed the Secretariat of State: “To our greatest regret the question raised is at present not timely.” Cf. Secretary of State Amleto Cicognani to Endre Hamvas, bishop of Csanád. Vatican, February 15, 1963; Memorandum on the letter arrived from the Vatican State Secretariat. Budapest, February 28, 1963; and Draft response of Hamvas to Secretary of State Cicognani. February 20, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 005-6/1963. The sources do not reveal when Hamvas sent the reply. The memorandum of the ÁEH is published in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 76–77.

- ¹³⁷ “Appunto di Mons. Samorè su un colloquio con Mons. Hamvas. 13 novembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 23–24.
- ¹³⁸ For the reports on König’s meeting with Mindszenty, see Barberini, *La politica*, 47–76. Additional documents are published in: Somorjai, *Sancta Sedes. II*, 178–199. The meeting is analyzed in detail in Fejérdy, “König bíboros,” 79–108.
- ¹³⁹ Proposal on the Council and the Vatican–Hungarian relations. Budapest, March 5, 1963. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1963/7. ő. e. 80–84.
- ¹⁴⁰ The ÁEH’s proposals on issues to be settled with the Vatican. March 22, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 78–81.
- ¹⁴¹ Hamvas’s reply to Secretary of State Cicognani’s telegram of March, in which he pressed for the possibility of a Vatican deputy negotiating in Hungary, must have been interpreted as such. Information on the negotiations between the Hungarian government and the Vatican. Budapest, month of May, 1963. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1963/7. ő. e. 123. In his reply, dated April 18 and sent on April 20, Hamvas, in accordance with József Prantner’s instructions, without any specifics disclosed that the Hungarian government was “prepared to receive the ecclesiastic coming from the Vatican and discuss issues concerning the Holy See and the Hungarian State.” Telegram of Endre Hamvas to Secretary of State Amleto Cicognani. Szeged, April 20, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. V–37–6/a/1963.
- ¹⁴² Secretary of State Cicognani’s telegram to Hamvas. Vatican City, April 22, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. V–37–6/a/1963.
- ¹⁴³ Cf. Annex to the report no. 001/98. on the conversation of the Hungarian ambassador to Vienna with Casaroli. Budapest, April 27, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 004–50/1963; and Information on the negotiations between the Hungarian government and the Vatican. Budapest, month of May, 1963. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1963/7. ő. e. 122–124. For the Hungarian government’s reply to the *nota verbale* see Barberini, *La politica*, 72–73.
- ¹⁴⁴ On the talks of May 7–9, 1963 see “Appunto di Mons. Casaroli sugli incontri con i rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (Con cinque Allegati). Vaticano, 18 maggio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 52–72. The reports prepared by the Hungarian side are published in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 101–17.
- ¹⁴⁵ Casaroli reported to John XXIII on May 16, 1963. See “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli sugli incontri con i rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (con cinque Allegati). Vaticano, 18 maggio 1963,” in *La politica*, 52. On what was said at the meeting, see Trasatti, *Vatican–Kremlin*, 240.
- ¹⁴⁶ Annex to the report 001/154. on the visit of the Hungarian delegation at the pope. Budapest, July 4, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 004–35/1963; Report of agent “Pál

Kékes” on the meetings in Rome of Endre Hamvas and Pál Brezanóczy (June 27–July 4, 1963), in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 124–28.

- ¹⁴⁷ On the secret list, see: “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli sugli incontri con i rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (con cinque Allegati) Vaticano, 18 maggio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 54.
- ¹⁴⁸ “Sacra Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. Adunanza ristretta del 16. VII. 1963 – Trattative con i Governi d’Ungheria e di Cecoslovacchia,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 82–89 (quoted sentence is on p. 85).
- ¹⁴⁹ For the documents of the negotiations, see Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 152–64, 180–81; and Barberini, *La politica*, 89–129.
- ¹⁵⁰ For the 12 points raised by the Holy See, see Barberini, *La politica*, 56. An agreement was reached likewise regarding the fate of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute. As we shall see below, this question was raised not by the Holy See but the representatives of the Hungarian government.
- ¹⁵¹ An excellent summary of this topic is given by Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 35–38. See also my detailed reconstruction: Fejérdy, “Strategie,” 103–23.
- ¹⁵² The Holy See’s view, which during the negotiations the Hungarian side could also learn, was formulated most concisely by the dean of the College of Cardinals, Tisserant: “The primary thing is to appoint the bishops, with whatever title: be they residential bishop, auxiliary bishop or apostolic administrator. The most important thing is that there be people who can give guidance to the clergy and can consecrate priests.” “Sacra Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. Adunanza ristretta del 16. VII. 1963—Trattative con i Governi d’Ungheria e di Cecoslovacchia,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 84. At the same time, the minutes of the meeting also testify that not all the cardinals shared this view.
- ¹⁵³ The document regulating the system of episcopal appointments is published in Barberini, *La politica*, 169–70.
- ¹⁵⁴ “Atto e Protocollo con Allegati firmati a Budapest. Budapest, 15 settembre 1964,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 158–59.
- ¹⁵⁵ On the basis of Hungarian sources, Csaba Szabó has demonstrated that the question of the oath of loyalty was not a central issue for either side. Cf. Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 40–41. On the concerns of the Secretariat of State about the taking of the oath by the Hungarian bishops, and the 1959 position, see: Visit to Mons. Salvatore Pappalardo on December 28, 1961. ÁBTL 3.2.3. Mt–764/6. “Arnold”. 62–64.
- ¹⁵⁶ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulla ripresa dei contatti con il Governo ungherese (Budapest, 14–24 marzo 1964),” in Barberini, *La politica*, 123; Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest,

- January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 126. The Holy See’s intentions in this direction are also emphasized by Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 37: “They obviously wished to exploit every opportunity to become acquainted with and win over the Hungarian bishops.”
- ¹⁵⁷ Report on the experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 6, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 145.
- ¹⁵⁸ Cf. Melloni, “Ostpolitik,” 24.
- ¹⁵⁹ The document on control is published for example in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 97–99.
- ¹⁶⁰ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulla ripresa dei contatti con il Governo ungherese (Budapest, 14–24 marzo 1964),” in Barberini, *La politica*, 109–11.
- ¹⁶¹ Cf. “Promemoria sulle trattative fra Santa Sede e rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (Roma, 1–5 ottobre 1963),” in Barberini, *La politica*, 94–96; “Atto e Protocollo con Allegati firmati a Budapest. Budapest, 15 settembre 1964,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 159.
- ¹⁶² Secretary of State Amleto Cicognani to Lajos Shvoy, bishop of Székesfehérvár. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. Sz–18–3/1964. The letter to Shvoy was written not just due to pressure by the leaders of Hungarian ecclesiastical policy, however. The bishop of Székesfehérvár himself contrived to ask the Holy See for guidance regarding the conduct to be followed. Cf. “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulla ripresa dei contatti con il Governo ungherese (Budapest, 14–24 marzo 1964),” in Barberini, *La politica*, 109–11.
- ¹⁶³ The ministerial commissioner was recalled from Hajdúdorog, effective March 19, 1964. This was done simultaneously in Székesfehérvár as well. Cf. Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 178–79; and “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulla ripresa dei contatti con il Governo ungherese (Budapest, 14–24 marzo 1964),” in Barberini, *La politica*, 110–11.
- ¹⁶⁴ “Atto e Protocollo con Allegati firmati a Budapest. Budapest, 15 settembre 1964,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 160–61.
- ¹⁶⁵ *Ibid.*, 157–58. On this cf. also Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 35–36.
- ¹⁶⁶ For example, undoubtedly it must have been the case of the priests expelled from the Central Seminary in 1959 (about which the Holy See had been informed first hand at the time) that was behind the urging for freedom of seminary training. Cf. the Italian translation of the letter to the bishops written by seminarians on March 9, 1959. “Da fonte riservatissime”. ASDMAE, DGAP 1950–57, S. Sede b. 1670, Ungheria. The Vatican attempted to garner information on the issue from several sources, but in spite of the reassuring information Casaroli considered it necessary to request specific guarantees ensuring the freedom of seminary

training. On this see: Report of “Kecskeméti” on the contacts of the Hungarian council delegation with the Holy See and the Vatican State Secretariat. Szeged. January 12, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 115–16; and “Atto e Protocollo con Allegati firmati a Budapest. Budapest, 15 settembre 1964,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 162–63.

¹⁶⁷ Cf. Fejérdy, “Hontalanok,” 81–82.

¹⁶⁸ Such for example was the Hungarian governmental reply (to be mentioned below) on the number of priests without permission to perform their functions.

¹⁶⁹ Borhi, *Iratok*, 34–35.

¹⁷⁰ Cf. Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 44–46.

¹⁷¹ We possess the following references to this: John XXIII first noted in his diary the necessity of resolving the Mindszenty affair in connection with the audience granted to Fabrizio Franco, the Italian minister to Budapest, on January 3, 1961. Next, in the spring of 1962 the attempt through Lardone to ensure Mindszenty’s attendance at the Council, and finally he made a statement to this effect in the first audience granted to the Hungarian council fathers. Cf. Roncalli/Giovanni XXIII, *Pater Amabilis*, 208; Information on the main experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, December 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022–32/1962; and Adriányi, “Miért és hogyan,” 75.

¹⁷² Through the submission entitled “Quaestio-Mindszentyana.” Cf. Fejérdy, “Hontalanok,” 77, note 59.

¹⁷³ Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 18, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 27. The Hungarian state security’s document allows us to infer also that evidently not everyone in the Secretariat of State considered a rapid settlement of the Mindszenty question to be critical, but rather the matter also became important to the Secretariat of State only at the wish of the pope.

¹⁷⁴ Speech of János Kádár at the March 8, 1963 session of the HSWP CC, in Ólmosi, *Mindszenty*, 97; Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 44; Fejérdy, “Hontalanok,” 79.

¹⁷⁵ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli sul suo colloquio con il Card. Mindszenty. Vaticano, 18 maggio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 75–76.

¹⁷⁶ “Card. Mindszenty al Papa eligendo. 15 giugno 1963,” in Somorjai, *Sancta Sedes. II*, 227; “Relazione di Mons. Rossi, Nunzio apostolico a Vienna, al Card. Segretario di Stato, sulla visita del Card. König al Card. Mindszenty. Vienna, 20 aprile 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 50; “Sacra Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. Adunanza ristretta del 16. VII. 1963—Trattative con i Governi d’Ungheria e di Cecoslovacchia,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 84–86.

- ¹⁷⁷ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulla ripresa dei contatti con il Governo ungherese (Budapest, 14–24 marzo 1964),” in Barberini, *La politica*, 121–22; Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 177.
- ¹⁷⁸ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulla ripresa dei contatti con il Governo ungherese (Budapest, 14–24 marzo 1964),” in Barberini, *La politica*, 121–24.
- ¹⁷⁹ For a summary of Casaroli’s arguments, see: József Száll, Hungarian ambassador in Rome to József Prantner József, chairman of the ÁEH. June 26, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 187–89. Casaroli later presented the Holy See’s position on the pages of *L’Osservatore Romano*, September 19, 1964. On the legal classification of the signed partial agreement see also: Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 194–97.
- ¹⁸⁰ Already in his report on his first trip to Budapest Casaroli appraised the situation thus: “non si possono nutrire illusioni di grandi risultati.” “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli sugli incontri con i rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (con cinque Allegati). Vaticano, 18 maggio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 69–70.
- ¹⁸¹ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli sugli incontri con i rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (con cinque Allegati). Vaticano, 18 maggio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 69–70.
- ¹⁸² Until the late 1950s an important element of denying state approval necessary for the bishops to perform their function was that the ecclesiastical policy of the time set as a goal the destruction of the Church in as short a time as possible. Cf. Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 35.
- ¹⁸³ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulla ripresa dei contatti con il Governo ungherese (Budapest, 14–24 marzo 1964),” in Barberini, *La politica*, 121–22, 123–24; Fejérdy, “Strategie,” 117.
- ¹⁸⁴ Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 36. Casaroli explicitly pointed out: appointing apostolic administrators and appointing bishops were not the same thing. “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli sugli incontri con i rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (con cinque Allegati). Vaticano, 18 maggio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 61.
- ¹⁸⁵ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli sugli incontri con i rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (con cinque Allegati). Vaticano, 18 maggio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 53–54.
- ¹⁸⁶ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulla ripresa dei contatti con il Governo ungherese [Budapest, 14–24 marzo 1964 (con n. 7 allegati)] 10 aprile 1964,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 103, 105. Casaroli brought up the following example of the tendentious wording: “the Holy See has faith in the Hungarian government because the activity of the Hungarian government is useful from the

point of view of the Hungarian people and equally of that of world peace,” in *ibid.* 105.

¹⁸⁷ “Promemoria sulle trattative fra Santa Sede e rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (Roma, 1–5 ottobre 1963),” in Barberini, *La politica*, 96.

¹⁸⁸ Among Casaroli’s published papers there is in any case not one report to be found in which the Vatican diplomat signaled to his superiors that reason the smaller number given by the Hungarian side did not match the Holy See’s figure of 1,000 impeded was because the data was erroneous but rather because they apply to something else.

¹⁸⁹ Report of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda for the Politburo on the negotiations between the Hungarian government and the Vatican. October 22, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 158.

¹⁹⁰ “Relazione di Mons Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulla ripresa dei contatti con il Governo ungherese [Budapest, 14–24 marzo 1964 (con n. 7 allegati)] 10 aprile 1964,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 105.

¹⁹¹ Sándor Kovács, bishop of Szombathely to József Prantner (September 26, 1964), in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 225; Information report on Session Three of the Second Vatican Council. 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 50.

¹⁹² A typical example of the above view is the comment of Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer, apostolic administrator of Esztergom, on naming the agreement a “gentlemen’s agreement:” “But are there any gentlemen here today?” Pro memoria on the comportement of Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer, apostolic administrator of Esztergom. September 1964. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. E–15–11/b/1964.

¹⁹³ “Appunto di Mons. Casaroli per l’Ambasciatore di Ungheria a Roma. Mai 1965,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 172–88.

¹⁹⁴ Report of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda for the Politburo on the negotiations between the Hungarian government and the Vatican. July 9, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 272–74.

¹⁹⁵ Pro memoria of József Prantner for the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on his negotiations in the Vatican. June 24, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 269–71. See also below, Part III, Section 1.2.2.

2. **The Hungarian People's Republic: Council and "Vatican policy"**

2.1. THE MEANS OF ACHIEVING TOTAL CONTROL

2.1.1. Monitoring Hungarian participants at the Council

Despite the hoped-for positives the decision by Hungarian political leadership to permit some bishops to participate in the Second Vatican Council counted as a risky one. The church-policy leader's plans for the Council had to be carried out not under "consolidated" domestic conditions but far from the country's borders, in a milieu that was considered expressly hostile. Under such circumstances the selection, proper guidance and continuous monitoring of the appropriate persons played a particularly significant role in the success of church policy. It is understandable, therefore, that in addition to deciding to allow participation the regime also required that it not only approved but also selected the bishops and attendants who would travel to Rome.

In accordance with the regime's structure two state organs played a prominent role in the selection process: the persons traveling to Rome from one session to the next were selected within the cooperation between the State Office for Church Affairs, responsible for maintaining open relations with the churches, and the state security organs performing the clandestine surveillance. In the case of the first session, already the earliest state security plans summarizing the operational tasks related to the Council emphasized that the importance of cooperation with the ÁEH was important in achieving the aims of church policy.¹ Later on, the need for the two state organs to coordinate their work and keep each other informed was repeatedly stressed.² Beyond all this, a working plan dated March 21, 1964 explicitly stated also that the ÁEH and state security must coordinate their work when selecting the persons who would attend the Council.³ That

cooperation between the two state organs was achieved is attested lastly by the fact that prior to the third session, beginning in the fall of 1964, in view of the impending signing of the Vatican–Hungarian agreement, and the anticipated appointment of the new bishops connected with it, the composition of the delegation was discussed three possible variations.⁴

At the same time, reviewing the documents of the decision-making process preceding each session, we can also state that the approval of the party state's supreme decision-making forum, the Politburo, was needed only for authorizing diocesan leaders to travel outside the country. It was at its meeting of September 4, 1962 that the Politburo approved Bishops Endre Hamvas of Csanád and Sándor Kovács of Szombathely, as well as the apostolic administrator of Eger, Pál Brezanóczy, to represent the Hungarian Church at the first session of the Second Vatican Council.⁵ It was likewise the Politburo's decision to expand the circle of prelates traveling to the second session with the inclusion of Bishop Kálmán Papp of Győr, as well as auxiliary Bishops Vince Kovács (administering the Diocese of Vác) and Imre Szabó of Esztergom.⁶ Finally, it was once again the Politburo that approved the selection of the increasing number of bishops proposed to attend the third and fourth sessions.⁷

Whereas the selection of chief pastors who would be allowed to attend the Council was decided in the supreme political forum, approving the composition of the entourage was assigned to the jurisdiction of the chairman of the State Office for Church Affairs.⁸ As will be seen, although the state security organs were allotted a prominent role in selecting the members of the escort, this function continued to be subordinated to church policy aims. The license given to the chairman of the ÁEH indicates unmistakably that the ultimate decision in the case of the attendants likewise remained in the hands of the political leadership.

In speaking of the decision-making process in Hungary regarding council attendance we have already presented how the three prelates traveling to the first session (Hamvas, Kovács and Brezanóczy) were selected in the basis of the recommendations of the State Office for Church Affairs. It was unequivocally church policy considerations that played the decisive role in the list of names in the end being expanded by two persons, contrary to the original proposal that originally envisioned only Hamvas's attendance. On the one hand, a single bishop traveling abroad would have offered too easy a

target and also would have reduced his chances of success in advocating the Hungarian position. On the other hand, following the failure to obtain invitations for the non-episcopal diocesan leaders, the sending of the apostolic administrator of Eger as the procurator for the bishop of Győr suitably documented the demand of the Hungarian government, which aimed to have the status quo in ecclesiastical policy recognized by the Vatican.

At the same time, in order to execute the church policy plans intended to lay the foundations for authorizing attendance at the Council, appropriate operational support was also needed. This is emphasized by a proposal dated June 28 drafted by the Interior Ministry's Division III/I for the conference of the secret services of the socialist countries held in Warsaw between July 5 and 7, 1962.⁹ The basic document of the Hungarian state security organs' activity relating to the Council pointed out that it was not sufficient to influence the attending council fathers "in a positive sense" by citing their obligations as citizens; monitoring the council delegation by agents was also needed. While no document explicitly referring to this has been found, the process of selecting who would attend the Council nonetheless makes it obvious that the political leadership also agreed with the recommendation to secure the delegation by appropriate operational means. Thus, when assembling the council delegation from the start state security's viewpoint were taken into account, and the services likewise attempted to look for suitable agents. At the same time, the repeated change in the names under discussion indicates that this was no simple task.

The selection of Endre Hamvas's escort did not yet cause major difficulties. The first operational plan, dated July 27, 1962, already included Agents "Pátkay" and "Kecskeméti" as the companions who would escort the bishop of Csanád, nor would this change later on.¹⁰ However, the final selection of the additional four persons accompanying the other two prelates, Kovács and Brezanóczy, was preceded by several versions. An operational plan of September 7 also included Agents "Zoli" and "Béla Molnár" as the attendants of the bishop of Szombathely, while the apostolic administrator of Eger, was to be accompanied Agent "Ásztalos" and a person to be chosen by Brezanóczy himself;¹¹ in the end, however, of those mentioned only "Béla Molnár" left for the Council. A new list, drafted not quite two weeks later, on September 19 (and regarded as essentially final), was changed in one

other detail: instead of episcopal secretary Győző Varjas, listed in the report as Sándor Kovács's attendant, in the end (at present for unknown reasons) László Sempsey, the deputy rector of the Central Seminary in Budapest, traveled to Rome.¹² However, this substitution did not alter the proportion of agents participating in the delegation either: of the six attendants (László Sempsey; the lay papal chamberlain and president of the Saint Stephen Society, Miklós Esty; István Hamvas, diocesan priest of Makó and a nephew of Endre Hamvas; professor of liturgical history, Polikárp Radó; the editor of *Vigilia*, Vid Mihelics; and Imre Timkó, Greek Catholic professor of the Theological Academy in Budapest) five ("Hívó," "Pátkay," "Kecskeméti," "Béla Molnár" and "János Kiss") were agents for the state security services.¹³

However, the decision to increase the number of prelates traveling to Rome, not only created an opportunity to dispatch additional accompanying agents but also made it possible for a recruited Hungarian ordinary to join the traveling party. For, it was not only the above-mentioned considerations of church policy that led Hungarian authorities to make serious efforts to get Pál Brezanóczy to the Council, but also the hope that through the prelate, who since 1958 had been collaborating with the Interior Ministry's Division III/III as an agent codenamed "Kékes," they would be able to monitor the delegation more effectively and at the same time obtain direct information about the Council's actual work as well as the bishops' official discussions at the Vatican.

Already at the time of the first session the leaders of ecclesiastical policy began preparing the second session. In view of the favorable experiences as early as the fall of 1962 it was obvious that a handful of Hungarian prelates would be allowed to attend the second session as well. This position was later confirmed by the fact that F. V. Ryazanov, the deputy head of the Soviet Office for Church Affairs likewise positively assessed the participation of the bishops from the socialist countries in the first council session and approved of them taking part in the next session.¹⁴ By this time the real question was whether it would be possible to satisfy the Holy See's wish articulated in the *nota verbale* to see more bishops from Hungary be allowed to attend the next session.

The first evaluations drafted within the ÁEH, taking into account the experiences of the concluded first session and the opinions of each of the rapporteurs for ecclesiastical affairs,¹⁵ called the Holy See's demand partially

fulfillable.¹⁶ In addition to the explicitly church-policy criteria, increasing the number of bishops traveling to the Vatican seemed desirable from the point of view of foreign policy as well. For example, on February 4, 1963 the Hungarian minister to Rome, József Száll, in a letter to Foreign Minister János Péter, stressed that with respect to the favorable international reception of Hungarian attendance sending a larger delegation headed by Hamvas to the second session was an idea worth contemplating. The minister went so far as to press for every diocese to be represented by the “cleric (bishop, auxiliary bishop, apostolic administrator or canon) who seemed most suitable” for this according to the government’s criteria.¹⁷

Summarizing the various positions in a proposal to the Politburo drafted on March 5, 1963, the chairman of the ÁEH, József Prantner, called it politically useful to Hungary if more prelates traveled to attend the second session than previously and simultaneously recommended a specific list of names. In addition to the prelates who attended the first session (Endre Hamvas, Sándor Kovács, and Pál Brezanóczy) he proposed sending Bishop Kálmán Papp of Győr, auxiliary Bishop and Apostolic Administrator Vince Kovács of Vác, and Vicar Capitular József Cserháti of Pécs to Rome. At the same time, the March proposal also stipulated that the list of names would be communicated to those concerned only one month before their departure.¹⁸

The stalling tactics employed already prior to the first session later made it possible for the list figuring in the March recommendation of the State Office for Church Affairs to evolve further. Finally, on the basis of the recommendation by the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda¹⁹ at its session of August 27, 1963 the Politburo approved, beyond the names appearing on the original list, the addition of auxiliary Bishop Imre Szabó of Esztergom and Archvicar Capitular Imre Várkonyi of Kalocsa as members of the Hungarian delegation. However, the Hungarian leaders wished to send Várkonyi, along with the other vicar capitular also included in the first version, József Cserháti, only in the event that the Holy See also made their attendance at the Council possible by appointing them as experts.²⁰ They reckoned with this possibility in the knowledge that prior to the first session—perhaps as a gesture to urgings by the Hungarians to invite the non-episcopal ordinaries to the Council—the Holy See had appointed Apostolic Administrators Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer of Esztergom, Pál

Brezanóczy of Eger and Sándor Klempa of Veszprém as *periti*.²¹ However, what the Vatican was prepared to do in the case of the apostolic administrators, who were authorized by the Holy See to administer the dioceses, it was unwilling to do in the case of the vicars capitular, who had been elected locally partly under pressure from the state. In his letter to Endre Hamvas on September 11, 1963, the general secretary of the Council, Archbishop Pericle Felici, indicated that the Holy See was prepared to provide accommodations for the council fathers, council experts and attendants. However, simultaneously he emphasized that the council fathers were allowed to bring only one attendant each, while under the provisions of the ecclesiastical code the vicars capitular would not be invited to the Council.²² Thus, in the end only the other six ordinaries included in the proposal by the Department of Agitation and Propaganda left for the second session, with a total of nine attendants.²³

In view of the positive experiences of the first session, Hungarian state security also soon began contemplating the idea of permitting a larger delegation to travel from Hungary to attend the second session. Taking into account the expanding possibilities they sought to increase the number of agents traveling to Rome, and to this end set the recruitment of additional agent candidates as a goal.²⁴ Ultimately, the chairman of the ÁEH approved nine attendants to travel: in addition to Miklós Esty, István Hamvas, and Imre Timkó, who had attended the first session, the diocesan chancellor of Csanád, Kornél Pataky, a professor at the Theological Academy in Budapest, József Bánk, the diocesan chancellor of Esztergom, Ignác Csepregi, the rector of the seminary in Győr, György Kovács, the diocesan chancellor of Vác, Géza Ákos, and a medical doctor, Ervin Siminszky, were allowed to leave for the Council.²⁵ In the end, the state security service succeeded in sending out nine agents in the council delegation, which along with the nine attendants had swelled to fifteen members.²⁶ However, the number of agents turning up in Rome during the second session was substantially higher than this: based on the experiences of the first session “Béla Molnár” and later “Kövé” traveled to Rome not as members of the council delegation but as representatives of the Hungarian Catholic press. Over the fall, additional operatives also paid visits to Rome as tourists or pilgrims.²⁷

The distinct possibility that, as a result of the Vatican–Hungarian negotiations begun in May 1963, new bishops would be appointed carried great

weight in the selection of the prelates who took part in the third session. Considering the uncertainties surrounding the expansion of the episcopate, the leaders of ecclesiastical policy elaborated three possible scenarios during the preparations. However, at its August 11, 1964 meeting the Politburo considered only two of the three versions acceptable: one which, because of the delay in appointing the new bishops, envisioned allowing sending a similar number of prelates to the previous year; and another which, recommended a delegation augmented with the new bishops, should their appointments occur. In the former case, the circle of chief pastors attending the second session would have been supplemented by the apostolic administrator of Veszprém, Sándor Klempa. In the latter case, meanwhile, aside from the episcopal candidates who the state had already approved in advance (József Cserháti, József Ijjas, József Bánk, and József Winkler), a delegation expanded to include the archabbot of Pannonhalma, Norbert Legányi, was also contemplated. At the same time, the Politburo rejected the third recommendation, which would have made it possible for essentially the entire episcopate to leave for the Council should the excommunicated priests be absolved.²⁸

The following month, Holy See announced that on September 15, 1964 it had made the following appointments: Endre Hamvas as archbishop of Kalocsa; Pál Brezanóczy as titular bishop of Rotaria; József Cserháti as titular bishop of Melzi and apostolic administrator of Pécs; József Ijjas as titular bishop of Tagarata and apostolic administrator of Csanád; and József Bánk and József Winkler as auxiliary bishops of Győr and Szombathely respectively.²⁹ After the managers of ecclesiastical policy were informed of these appointments the second scenario went into effect. Under this, on September 18 eleven prelates departed for Rome to attend the third session.³⁰ In any case, the Politburo's renewed approval was no longer needed for the delegation, which exceeded the previous one by four, to travel: the party state's supreme decision-making organ was merely informed in a memorandum. That is, the joint working conference of the HSWP CC secretaries and deputy prime ministers held on September 14, 1964 acknowledged that in accordance with the Politburo's earlier resolution after the episcopal appointments had occurred the second scenario had gone into effect.³¹

The selection of the attendants who left for the third session was influenced by two factors. The experiences of the second session had

unequivocally indicated that the large entourage assigned to the council fathers had proven unfortunate, both in terms of church policy and from an operational standpoint.³² In Rome, compared to the number of the arriving prelates the size of the entourage created the impression that their duty was not to help the council fathers but monitor them. The Holy See therefore once again emphasized that every chief pastor was allowed to bring along at most one attendant. The Vatican would not shoulder the financing of the superfluous attendants and the physician during their stay abroad.³³

The experiences of the second session also demonstrated that the larger number of attendants by no means increased the operational possibilities, because the attendants on account of their status from the start had less room to maneuver and a narrow network of contacts. Based on the negative experiences, already beginning in February 1964 the Hungarian state security service was working on dispatching in the council father's entourage a smaller number of well-trained agents to the following session. Specifically, apart from "János Kiss" and "Kecskeméti," who had acquired useful contacts, plans were made to send out two additional theological experts at most.³⁴

The other factor influencing the selection of the attendants was the anticipated increase in the number of chief pastors traveling to Rome. In accordance with the three scenarios elaborated by the leaders of church policy, beginning in the summer of 1964 three versions began to be considered in the case of the attendants as well. Based on the experiences of the second session, plans were made to try to reduce the size of the entourage to a minimum in all three cases: under the first scenario, three attendants would have traveled with six prelates; under the second, four attendants with the ten council fathers; and under the last, the fifteen-member episcopal delegation (anticipating the lifting of the excommunications) would have been accompanied by five attendants. In addition to the smaller entourage, plans were still being made to send out agents under other pretexts (biblical congress, press worker).³⁵ Following the resolution adopted by the Politburo on August 11, 1964, the number of possible scenarios was ultimately reduced to two;³⁶ finally, by mid-September the number of travelers was fixed.³⁷

The reduction in the proportion of the entourage did not mean an identical reduction in the number of agents taking part in the council delegation, however. This was thanks above all else to the fact that—as was referred to above—the recruitment of additional agents had been made a goal as early as

the spring of 1963. Later on, cooperating with the State Office for Church Affairs during the Vatican–Hungarian negotiations, state security succeeded in planting persons already recruited or under recruitment among the episcopal candidates. Thus, among the ten chief pastors departing for the third session ultimately four agents and one candidate agent were sent out, along with an additional three agents in their entourage.³⁸

Compared to the delegation allowed out to the previous session, the composition of the delegation traveling to the fourth session changed only to a slight degree. Pericle Felici, the Council's general secretary, sent a letter to Archbishop Endre Hamvas of Kalocsa on July 16, 1965, in which he urged the prelate to try to obtain travel permits for all those entitled to attend, but in vain.³⁹ The archbishop's letter to József Prantner on this subject, sent on August 7, arrived too late.⁴⁰ Based on the recommendation of the State Office for Church Affairs and the Department of Agitation and Propaganda, the Politburo had already approved the list of eleven persons allowed to attend the fourth session at its August 4 meeting.⁴¹ The only change from the delegation granted permission to travel to the third session consisted of approving the Greek Catholic bishop of Hajdúdorog, Miklós Dudás, to replace Archabbot Norbert Legányi of Pannonhalma because of the disloyal conduct displayed by the latter. On August 18 Imre Miklós sent a letter including the list of names approved by the Politburo to Hamvas, who soon notified those concerned.⁴² Ultimately not eleven but ten prelates left for the final session:⁴³ Imre Szabó, the auxiliary bishop of Esztergom, elected to stay home instead, citing the poor state of his health.⁴⁴

When selecting the escorts for the fourth, concluding council session, likewise it was the practice of the third session that was followed, and only three persons were allowed out in this capacity. The experiences obtained in the fall of 1964 had in fact proven that the members of the council delegation could be adequately monitored through a smaller number of agents, though ones with better possibilities. Thus, in the end only three priests accompanied the ten pastors at the fourth session: the diocesan chancellor of Vác, Géza Ákos, and the deputy general secretary of the Catholic Committee of the National Peace Council, György Vitányi, remained members of the entourage. However, István Hamvas, who had been present throughout the earlier phase of the Council, was removed because of his "unreliable conduct."⁴⁵ Although Archbishop Endre Hamvas of Kalocsa

asked the ÁEH leadership to permit Géza Antal and Géza Kovács, the diocesan chancellor of Kalocsa, to alternate as his attendant during the last session, ultimately the ÁEH approved only the latter to travel. Thus, the substitution scheduled for October 25 did not take place either.⁴⁶

For the sake of meeting the goals of church policy more effectively, it was seen as necessary to provide the members of the council delegation, assembled according to the criteria of the state, with appropriate instructions as well. The travelers were instructed in two forums. Prior to each session (on September 21, 1962, September 20, 1963, and September 17, 1964) the prelates who were to attend the Council were received by the member of the Council of Ministers responsible for ecclesiastical affairs and the chairman of the State Office for Church Affairs. During these meetings Gyula Kállai and József Prantner stressed the importance of loyal conduct towards the state. Prior to the final session Pál Ilku and Prantner met with the departing chief pastors.⁴⁷

The political guidance imparted to the bishops during these audiences prior to departure was meant first and foremost to adequately prepare the prelates to represent the state's views and simultaneously give a positive picture of the Hungarian Church's situation. For example, before the first session, perceived as a "dress rehearsal," among the arguments elaborated at the State Office for Church Affairs⁴⁸ it was pointed out to the chief pastors first of all that it was the trust placed in them by the state that had made their travel possible, which they must measure up to fully. In other words, as Hungarian citizens they were obliged to defend the prestige of the People's Republic against possible attacks. Furthermore, they also had to make their loyalty visible to the outside world by paying frequent visit to the embassy in Rome. Beyond this, the council fathers were encouraged to champion the cause of peace and peaceful co-existence at every forum in harmony with the foreign-policy propaganda of the Socialist Bloc, as well as urge arms reduction and the condemnation of atomic weapons. Finally, the prelates were instructed to inform the competent authorities at the Holy See of the Hungarian government's willingness to negotiate. This, however, in no way meant a willingness to accept unilaterally dictated conditions. An indispensable condition for resolving the still unsettled questions was above all recognition by the Vatican of the Hungarian state's sovereignty as well as Legal Edict No. 22 of 1957 expressing this.⁴⁹ A similar one-to-two-hour "gentle persuasion"⁵⁰ prior to the subsequent sessions likewise had its result:

only in the case of Archabbot Norbert Legányi of Pannonhalma did it occur that a prelate already approved once to travel abroad was subsequently forbidden to depart for the next session because of inappropriate conduct while in Rome. The rest of the prelates proved suitably loyal to the Hungarian state. The effectiveness of the guidance is shown furthermore by the letter of thanks sent by Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely to the chairman of the ÁEH, József Prantner, upon learning that he would also be allowed to attend the second council session: "I promise to constantly keep sight of those tasks which Deputy Prime Minister Gyula Kállai was kind enough to communicate to us council fathers prior to our first departure. I hope that my humble participation also will help the good relations between state and Church to be strengthened and endure."⁵¹

Independently of the guidance given to the prelates, the departing agents were also separately prepared by the employees of the Interior Ministry's Sections III/III-1 and III/I-3 prior to each session. In their case the questions they could expect to be asked were taken into account. To this end, an individually tailored "behavioral line," along with answers to be given to various questions, were elaborated for each agent and was to be followed during their stay abroad. Apart from special assignments, which varied from one individual to the next, the agents' general mission was to provide operational support for church-policy aims. This they were to achieve first and foremost by promoting the unity of the delegation, influencing the council fathers in a positive direction, and observing closely the delegation's behavior, activity and statements. Additionally, they were charged with gathering material about the Council's activities, obtaining information about the plans, decisions and aims of the Holy See and the émigré priests in relation to the socialist countries, especially Hungary, and promoting the exclusion of the emigration. Finally, for the sake of the longer-term plans they were expected to study Vatican and other ecclesiastical contacts and institutions of operational value from the point of view of creating conditions for potentially planting agents.⁵²

Beyond the careful selection and advance preparation and guidance of the ecclesiastics travelling abroad, efforts were made to ensure they were continuously monitored during their stay in Rome as well. The task of constantly reminding the members of the council delegation of the government's expectations fell first and foremost to the employees of the

Hungarian embassy in Rome. Thus, the visits paid by the Hungarian council fathers to the embassy in Rome not only were intended to signal their loyalty to their state but simultaneously served also to reinforce loyal behavior. In compliance with central directives, the minister and his subordinates regularly received the bishops during all four sessions. Beyond the official receptions, opportunities for them to speak with each bishop separately as well and clear up any arising difficulties were arranged in a manner agreed upon with the State Office for Church Affairs.⁵³

A striking example of the embassy's efforts to influence the council fathers and utilize them politically took place the day before Endre Hamvas's scheduled talks at the Vatican Secretariat of State on November 11, 1962. During the luncheon given in honor of the Hungarian prelates the minister to Rome, József Száll, once again "reviewed" with him those topics which the bishop of Csanád had to discuss with the secretary of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs at the talks the next day.⁵⁴ This "reinforcement" was needed in the first place because the central topic of the conversation with Samorè was Hamvas's submission *Quaestio Mindszentyana*, which presented the government's position on the Mindszenty question.⁵⁵

In addition, a less direct, but in any case important opportunity to influence the Hungarian conciliar delegation and increase its loyalty was provided by the various services that the embassy provided. Beyond supplying the delegation with various material goods (wine and other gifts),⁵⁶ this role was filled first and foremost by those excursions which beginning with the second session the embassy organized on days off between council meetings. Organized programs of this kind, in which the Hungarian prelates, fatigued by the monotony of the council work, gladly took part, succeeded in preventing the latter from spending their free time in the company of persons (e.g., the Hungarian émigrés) who might exert on them what the state viewed as an unfavorable influence.⁵⁷

In addition to maintaining open contacts, for the sake of obtaining up-to-date information and, immediate guidance if the need arose, continuous contact was maintained with some of the agents dispatched during the sessions as well. This task was overseen in part by the intelligence services' Rome station; however, an operative agent from the Division III/III of the Interior Ministry likewise traveled to Rome during the council sessions. Contact between the handler and the agents was established during excursions

or embassy receptions, while additional meetings took place in public places (cafés and restaurants designated in advance), occasionally at the embassy, or at the delegation's residence.⁵⁸

2.1.2. Domestic control

From the outset, those in charge of guiding church policy were aware that the decision to authorize the possibility of limited participation might endanger the status quo that had emerged in Hungary in the relationship between church and state. They sought to counterbalance the anticipated negative effects not merely by carefully selecting and monitoring those who would be traveling abroad. Beginning as early as the summer of 1962 preparations were made to head off the emergence of any potential unfavorable consequences among those who were staying home. It is in a proposal drafted by the Hungarian state security organs on June 28, 1962 in preparation for the impending meeting of socialist secret services in Warsaw that one can discern most tangibly the two main areas in which they intended to neutralize the Council's harmful effects on the party state.⁵⁹

In order to minimize the domestic risks inherent in the decision to authorize attendance, first and foremost access to information was to be controlled. In the area of the press, initiatives in this direction were launched already during the period of explicit hostility to the Council. Based on the experiences gained, as early as January 1962 the need for cooperation between the State Office for Church Affairs and the state security service in order to prioritize the questions arising in connection with the Council came into focus.⁶⁰ These were taken into account in determining the bases for the information policy followed during the Council that was outlined in a proposal drafted by the ÁEH on July 27, 1962.⁶¹ According to the proposed strategy, the Catholic press would concentrate on presenting and disseminating those "favorable" views which were acceptable to the regime. The task of the Protestant papers, meanwhile, was to reinforce these tendencies by articulating more radical demands. Parallel to this, the atheist press was directed to urge that those topics which occupied a central place in the socialist regime's propaganda—first and foremost peaceful co-existence—be placed on the Council's agenda.

How, the practical implementation of the above strategy, taking into account the unique profile of each press organ, was conceived during the first session becomes obvious from the working plan of the State Office for Church Affairs drafted two months later.⁶² In the case of the Catholic weekly *Új Ember*, it was considered necessary to launch a separate column dealing with the Council, which would provide positive information about the activity of the Hungarian council fathers and the “democratic elements” appearing in the Church, as well as explicit support for the Council’s “progressive tendency.” In addition to propagating the progressive ecclesiastical position, the journal of the peace priest movement, *Katolikus Szó*, was assigned the task of paying increased attention to “unmasking reactionary tendencies.” The journal of the Catholic intelligentsia, *Vigilia*, was instructed to publish in its October 1962 issue an article penned by Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely, which was address the topic “The Significance of the Council from the Point of View of Peace and Arms Reduction.”⁶³ The Protestant journals were expected to emphasize that a condition for Christian unity was the democratization of the Catholic Church. At the same time they had to express the view that even thus, in light of the previous oppressive policy experienced at Catholic hands and the dogmatic differences, they saw little chance of the desired unity being achieved. With regard to the secular press, for the sake of coordinated propaganda work it was urged that first and foremost the workers of the dailies, the Hungarian Telegraph Office (MTI) and the radio be suitably informed.

The detailed information policy worked out in connection with the Council, and the operational means employed were intended to control the public’s access to information. Yet the chosen strategy also entailed a certain risk. Those in charge of church policy were aware of the danger that regular reports might arouse unnecessarily great interest in the Council among the faithful, who, according to surveys were otherwise rather indifferent: “It is important that it is we who inform the public about the Council, and that this informing should conform with our political goals. At the same time, we must not carry out excessive propaganda for the Council.”⁶⁴ The Czechoslovak party leadership took this argument so seriously that it saw preventing the spread of information about Vatican II preferable, even thereby assuming the risk of the clergy and the faithful becoming informed from alternative sources which the state could not control.⁶⁵ For their part, the Hungarian authorities

considered it more proper to take control of access to information and manipulate the public as the regime's interests demanded: "It is our goal that they do not obtain their information from listening to Western radio stations but rather that we organize true and realistic information and give it to them indirectly."⁶⁶

According to one report drafted during the first session, the leadership in Hungary actually succeeded in ensuring that the clergy became informed about the Council in the first place from *Új Ember* and *Katolikus Szó*.⁶⁷ Other data, however, indicate that this assertion must be treated with reservation. For example, the November 1962 morale report by "László Németh" on the Council for the Diocese of Eger cannot be regarded as an isolated case. In it, among other things the following may be read: "Vilmos Csáti and Károly Medve are trying to tune in to Vatican Radio to get news of the Council. I told them that I listened to the opening of the Council through Radio Vienna."⁶⁸

Beyond controlling the press reports published about the Council for the broader public, the State Office for Church Affairs prepared a separate plan for "appropriately" informing the clergy as well.⁶⁹ The so-called "crown assemblies" (*korona-gyűlések*) were found to be the most suitable forums for this. Therefore, in order to be able to "meet the demands for information arising in the Church" and "keep the initiative in its grasp,"⁷⁰ the ÁEH recommended debating council-related topics and holding a lecture series of an ecclesiastical-policy character within the framework of such priestly gatherings. To influence the clergy, it was recommended during the first session, for example, that priests, including peace priests, debate the topics "The Significance of the Council in the Life of the Church" and "The Moscow World Peace Conference for Arms Reduction and Peace."⁷¹ A report by the Budapest commissioner for ecclesiastical affairs, dated October 1, 1962, illustrates the fact that the local leaders of church policy did indeed attempt to put these decisions taken at the highest level into effect.⁷² However, other sources make it unequivocal that the majority of priests were aware of the state's intention to manipulate them and did not dare to address the topics of the crown assemblies substantively, and attempted to extricate themselves from the obligation to hold such lectures. Imre Ambrus, diocesan priest of the village of Búcsúszentlászló, for instance, felt it important to emphasize

that he agreed to hold the lecture entitled “Dialogue and the Second Vatican Council” exclusively out of obedience to the dean.⁷³

The censoring of information about the Council took additional forms as well. A striking example of the attitude of the church-policy leadership is the fate of the message Pope John XXIII sent to the Hungarian people at the end of the first session. The incident described in detail above, provides a good illustration of how the state authorities sought to satisfy believers’ needs for information in such a way as to not arouse thereby excessive interest in the Second Vatican Council and not endanger the successes achieved by the regime’s ecclesiastical policy. However, while they judged sabotaging the transmission of the papal message to be risky, they did not hesitate, if their interests so dictated, to ban publication of pastoral letters prepared at the local level. This is what happened, for example, to the 1964 advent circular of the apostolic administrator of Esztergom, Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer, in which he spoke of the conciliar debates not, as the state expected, as the tooth-and-nail fight of the progressive and conservative wings, and discussed the already adopted “innovativ” conciliar decisions as the organic continuation of the Church’s millennia-old tradition.⁷⁴

In addition to controlling the flow of information, in the spirit of the HSWP’s resolutions on church policy, a proposal for counteracting the harmful domestic effects of the Council, drafted by Hungarian state security on June 28, 1962 for the impending meeting of socialist secret services in Warsaw, named the support of loyal priests, as well as the isolation and increased monitoring of “reactionary circles,” as another urgent task.

It was first and foremost the selection of those who would attend each Council’s session, as well as the results of the Vatican–Hungarian negotiations, that served to strengthen the loyal faction and weaken the position of those mistrustful of the state. For example, the favorable reception that the Vatican gave the Hungarian delegation that appeared for the first session (which, as was seen earlier, had been assembled with political—and operational—reliability as a criterion of the utmost importance) was appraised by the “progressive clerical circles” as vindication of their previous conduct.⁷⁵ The subsequent concessions and gestures of the new *Ostpolitik* associated with John XXIII (for instance, the mere fact that negotiations between the Vatican and Hungary had begun) further strengthened this impression. Still later, elements of the 1964 partial agreement that became tangible for broader

ecclesiastical opinion as well (the identity of the appointed bishops, the return of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute, and the selection of the priests studying there) likewise pointed in this same direction.

At the same time, these results also exerted an effect on those priests who displayed a reserved or outright dismissive attitude towards the state. Already after the first session the analysis of the State Office for Church Affairs had determined that the “vacillators were drawing closer to the progressives, a lesser number of them are reserved and await further developments,” and simultaneously “reaction has been forced onto the defensive and has been confused.”⁷⁶ The state deliberately attempted later on to exploit this situation, which had emerged by the spring of 1963, to strengthen the loyal priests while increasing their number. For example, after learning through an agent’s reports that auxiliary Bishop Imre Kisberk of Székesfehérvár, previously sharply opposed to the state, had exclaimed: “if Rome approves of the conduct of Hamvas and his companions, why doesn’t it simply say, please adapt yourselves a bit and you shouldn’t be so rigidly opposed, he (i.e., Kisberk) would gladly go to every meeting and would do whatever he could ‘for them,’”⁷⁷ they soon began trying to persuade him, with the assistance of loyal priests as well, that, if he were to change his previous attitude, his situation was not hopeless in the eyes of the ÁEH.⁷⁸ In time this indeed had its results.⁷⁹

To strengthen the loyal attitude among the lower clergy, efforts were made to utilize, among other things, the priests’ crown assemblies. On the one hand, the diocesan priests at these gatherings—first and foremost priests active in the peace movement—were urged to speak critically about the “reactionary” views within the Church and demand internal reforms. Meanwhile, agents were supposed to ensure that each crown assembly asked the Hungarian council fathers in a telegram to place progressive topics (e.g., peaceful co-existence) on the agenda.⁸⁰ However, these actions were not only meant to win over vacillating priests. The activation of the “democratic forces within the Church regarding the Council” also served the goal of favorably influencing the general mood among the faithful. The enlarged role of the priest peace movement in turn was expected to strengthen patriotic feeling in the faithful, too, and unequivocally turn them against the Church’s “reactionary” tendencies.⁸¹

Maintaining the ecclesiastical policy situation, which was evolving to the state's advantage, parallel to the strengthening of the sense of loyalty, demanded increased monitoring, discrediting and isolation of the "reactionary circles." In this area it was the task of the (Catholic) press to demonstrate: how much the "reactionary" position had harmed the cause of the Church throughout the course of history and at the same time assist in distancing the faithful from priests displaying a hostile attitude towards the state.⁸² By criticizing improper attitudes and promoting the value of "proper and loyal" conduct, the members of the peace priest movement had to isolate "reactionary priests" first of all within the clergy.⁸³ Naturally, the state security organs similarly planned to use agents to monitor "groups organized by clerical reaction" more closely, in order to be able to move against them by operational means if needed.⁸⁴

Not only priests engaged in the prohibited youth ministry or the Jesuits arrested in 1965 on charges of illegal conspiracy⁸⁵ ranked as such a "reactionary group," but from a certain perspective the entire episcopate as well. János Kádár's comment after the signing of the partial agreement with the Holy See, for example, typifies this attitude: "In fact the legal episcopate is also an opposition force, an organized, huge party. Sure, there is no firefight between us, but they are in opposition."⁸⁶ The state consequently considered close surveillance to be necessary likewise in the case of the loyal bishops exposed to the Holy See's influence,⁸⁷ though naturally it was those chief pastors who showed themselves to be unbending towards the state who stood in the crossfire of the attacks.⁸⁸

One of the primary goals was the isolation within the episcopate of Lajos Shvoy, the diocesan bishop who ranked as the most reactionary in the eyes of the state. In the wake of the new Vatican eastern policy, the plan,⁸⁹ which stretched back to the period prior to the Council, was modified somewhat. While the staff of the State Office for Church Affairs in April 1963 still spoke with him in a hostile tone and reproached him because "he alone is an enemy of democracy among the members of the episcopate,"⁹⁰ later on they saw it as more proper to try to exert pressure on him through the Holy See. The opportunity to do so arose when, during the negotiations, Casaroli vigorously pushed for the recall of the last two ministerial commissioners working out of the episcopal residences. Whereas in the case of Bishop Miklós Dudás of Hajdúdorog they did not raise demands to the Vatican, they were

willing to recall the commissioner watching Shvoy only after the Holy See had sent the bishop a letter asking him to show more understanding attitude towards the government.⁹¹ The teachers of the Central Seminary considered the fact that the Holy See had sent a letter reprimanding Shvoy to be significant. Moreover, they drew the conclusion that the competent Vatican authorities were striving vigorously to see some sort of consensus reached in Hungary.⁹² In reality, the diplomatically-worded letter could not be expressly regarded as an admonition. The ministerial commissioner found that the text praised Shvoy to a completely exaggerated extent and encouraged him to cooperate too little.⁹³

Although the means used against Shvoy changed, through the new approach ecclesiastical policy sought to achieve the same thing: the marginalization of the bishop and his isolation within the episcopate. In vain did Shvoy, for instance, make a gesture of writing to the chairman of the State Office for Church Affairs in an effort to obtain permission to attend the third council session, as the Vatican had directed; his more moderate behavior was not considered sincere and his request was rejected.⁹⁴ The fact that his auxiliary bishop substituting for him could barely gain admission to the episcopal conference of early February 1965 may likewise be assessed partly as a consequence of incitement against the bishop of Székesfehérvár. That which the body could not allow itself vis-à-vis the doyen of the Bench of Bishops, it could do vis-à-vis his replacement, Imre Kisberk.⁹⁵

2.2. GOALS TO BE ACHIEVED THROUGH ATTENDANCE AT THE COUNCIL

Like the other socialist countries, in Hungary, too, three arguments favored authorizing attendance at Vatican II. First, the church leaders loyal to the state and the agents sent with the delegation provided an opportunity to obtain direct information not only about the Council's work, but also about the balance of power within the Roman Curia and the expected development of the Holy See's (eastern) policy. Second, the Hungarian presence reckoned with the possibility of increasing the socialist regime's prestige, or at least making its international isolation avoidable. Last, but not least, a very important factor was that by authorizing participation it seemed possible to strengthen those forces at the Council urging the inner renewal of the Church

as well as the approval of more open attitude shown towards the modern world—including, the Communist regime.

2.2.1. Intelligence gathering

A precondition for realizing the goals of church policy for the Council was to ensure the availability of the necessary information to the decision-makers. In lieu of Vatican–Hungarian diplomatic relations, in the case of the Council (as in relations with the Vatican in general) the task of gathering this fell in part to the Hungarian embassy in Rome.⁹⁶ Beyond this, important were those reports obtained by the State Office for Church Affairs, which openly maintained contacts with the churches, from the bishops traveling to the Council and their attendants.⁹⁷ The leaders of the party state, who saw the Vatican as a primordial enemy, furthermore considered it exceedingly important to become as fully informed as possible about the activity of the Holy See and the Catholic Church—including in the present case, the Council. Thus, in gathering intelligence to the organs of state security (intelligence) were allotted a significant role as well. It is no coincidence, therefore, that the greatest amount of data concerning the collection of information about Vatican II is to be found among the documents produced by state security.⁹⁸

The operational plans drafted prior to each session of the Second Vatican Council, the summary reports prepared after the sessions, as well as the questionnaires used in collecting the reports from the dispatched agents, all attest to the fact that to the end the Council remained in the eyes of the leaders of the regime in Hungary a unique, diversionary ideological-political campaign clothed in ecclesiastical garb. Therefore, it remained the crucial task of gathering information about the Council throughout to reveal what had motivated the Holy See to convene an event of such moment,⁹⁹ and what long-term (political) aims the Vatican wished to achieve with the Council.¹⁰⁰

For this reason, apart from jointly monitoring the departing council participants, the idea of coordinating the intelligence and counter-intelligence activities of the socialist state security organs was raised already in advance of the Council. However, in the end the Hungarians did not adopt their recommendation to establish a central command agency, under Polish or Russian leadership, since, in their assessment, the demand for this degree of

cooperation had not been raised on the part of their fellow agencies. Thus, they agreed only upon bilateral cooperation with their Polish partners.¹⁰¹ After the first session, the idea of accelerating the mutual exchange of information during the second session came up once more at the meeting held between July 26 and 28, 1963; no decision was reached on the issue at this conference, however.¹⁰² The lack of coordination in operational work in any case often led to clashes. For example, in the case of Polish and Hungarian intelligence, which moved in identical circles when it came to the Vatican, it happened on a number of occasions that the agencies of both states purchased the same intelligence for great sums. This came to light only later, when exchanging information.¹⁰³

To answer the questions arising in connection with the Council, goals were set first and foremost to obtain the repeatedly revised schemata and other conciliar materials meant for debate, to learn the major positions (often voiced at closed-door meetings) taking shape during the debates and the conciliar documents in preparation. Among the topics debated by the Council, it was primarily those with a perceived direct political relevance that ranked as more significant. However, among the expressly ecclesiastical topics, too, those in charge of church policy were interested in all questions which could impact the life of the churches in the socialist states in some respect.¹⁰⁴ The documents outlining the directed press campaign that was planned for the Council reveal that, in addition to the explicitly political Catholic positions related to war and peace, social teaching and Communism, the subjects of the permanent diaconate, priestly celibacy and the theological discussion of episcopal authority as the decentralization of ecclesiastical leadership, for example, fell into the latter category. Later on, for similar reasons they also would attribute importance, for instance, to the resolution on the compulsory retirement ages for bishops.¹⁰⁵

It was also possible to learn about the Council and some of the events that took place there from legal press sources, since the various (Catholic) news agencies likewise strove to inform their readers to the fullest extent possible. Because of the secrecy maintained at the Council, however, the possibility of obtaining news in this way had its limits.¹⁰⁶ Thus, from the beginning it was important for Hungarian state security to obtain, apart from the officially published information, other, internal conciliar materials as well. Thanks to the agents among the council fathers, the task was

successfully completed to a significant extent. It is known, for instance, that in the summer of 1963 the council Secretariat handed Pál Brezanóczy, because of his status as *peritus*, the *schemata* that had appeared up to then without the slightest hesitation.¹⁰⁷ The documents found in the archives of the State Office for Church Affairs likewise attest to the fact that the leaders of Hungarian church policy—either through agents or the chief pastors allowed out of the country—gained access to the Council’s internal working documents as well. In the documentation center assisting the daily work of the ÁEH not only have the final texts of the conciliar resolutions survived, but also the *relationes* and *emendationes*, which reflect clearly the various working stages, debated issues and major viewpoints that emerged in the wake of the debates on draft texts.¹⁰⁸

In addition to the materials detailing the Council’s work of, Hungarian church policy was especially interested in obtaining information about its main factions. From the point of view of evaluating the ecclesiastical event (which was understood in terms of political-ideological categories as the struggle of the “conservative-reactionary” and the “liberal-progressive” groups) and the Vatican’s anticipated conduct in the future, the need to possess up-to-date reports about the development of the balance of power within the Catholic Church was regarded as critical.¹⁰⁹ An increasingly more accurate knowledge of the positions, leading figures and strength of the main factions not only must have contributed to an understanding of the Holy See’s policy but also could become a means of Hungarian church policy. Those running the socialist regime had an interest in strengthening the known differences in views within the Catholic Church and thereby both weaken the Church and support the “progressive” trend. They sought to realize this latter aim with, among other things, the “help” of the Hungarian council fathers, who were appropriately briefed about the “viewpoints which must be supported corresponding to the interests of the Hungarian Church and the criteria of better cooperation with the state.”¹¹⁰

Furthermore, a more detailed uncovering of the circumstances of the Hungarian émigré priests in Rome ranked as an important area for gathering intelligence to serve the aims of church policy. The Hungarian Communist government regarded this group, by virtue of its mediating role between the Hungarian Church and the Holy See and the influence it exerted on Vatican decision-making with regard to Hungary, as especially dangerous, and already

beginning in the early 1950s it systematically collected data on the émigré priests in Rome. The previous practice was modified during the Council in that, in view of the experiences gained, the regime no longer contented itself with gathering information on each prominent person but attempted also to uncover the internal power relations within the “clerical emigration.” It was almost certainly thanks to this recognition that during the first session state security, building on the valuable materials of the personal dossiers assembled previously, opened a group dossier under the codename “Hontalanok” (‘Stateless people’) in order to “uncover, document and obstruct” the “criminal activity of the reactionary émigré Hungarian priests grouped around” the Pontifical Hungarian Institute, “determine the identities of their contacts, seize their illegal channels, and in addition dissolve the hostile group.”¹¹¹ It was here that materials were gathered on each priest, on the émigrés’ activity as a whole, and, lastly, on the prestige of the more important émigré priests in the eyes of the Vatican.

Like the reports obtained about the Council’s activity and the various ecclesiastical factions, from observing the emigration, too, more was hoped for than just data on individuals, power relations within the emigration and controlling the influence the group exerted on the Holy See. From the beginning Hungarian state security anticipated that it would be able also to obtain additional information about the Holy See’s (political) plans through persons belonging to the Pontifical Hungarian Institute. After unsuccessful attempts to recruit émigré priests in this area, it was thanks above all to the information of the agents dispatched to Rome while the Council was in session that it succeeded in supplementing the data obtained from the intelligence agents as well as from listening devices installed in the Pontifical Hungarian Institute. At the same time, increasingly important were those reports obtained by the well-trained intelligence officers of the Rome station working under diplomatic cover using the method of guided conversations (*sötét hírszerzés*) from the new contacts they were able to establish by virtue of their embassy posting.¹¹²

Finally, for the operational support of church-policy goals relating to the Holy See to succeed, sufficient information needed to be obtained about the various Vatican subjects, the personnel of each institution, as well as the workings of Italian counter-intelligence. In connection with the latter, the dispatched agents had to submit an account after every session and in

the subsequent periods attempted to organize the clandestine operational work based on the experiences gained. In addition to the workings of the various offices of the Curia, during the Council particular interest surrounded the activities, plans and personnel of the Secretariat for Christian Unity, which was regarded as the bastion of the “progressive wing,” as well as of the Secretariat for Non-Christians, founded in 1964. In accordance with the state security interests, the “study of persons falling within the sphere of interest” of intelligence, and the creation of a long-term relationship with them, assumed an ever greater importance among the agents’ duties as well.¹¹³

The questions of primary interest to Hungarian church policy (the activity and resolutions of the Council, balance of power within the curial factions, the Vatican’s eastern policy) remained the same throughout the period under examination. Regarding the demands for specific information made by the state security organs, it appears at first glance that the thinking characteristic of the initial periods, reflecting almost exclusively the Communist regime’s distorted picture of the Vatican, hardly changed. However, in spite of all this, the information, collected, summarized and passed on according to a special criterion, helped the Hungarian government to form by the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council a more realistic, more nuanced picture of the Vatican than previously, albeit a picture that was naturally strongly influenced by ideological clichés and prejudices.

2.2.2. Socialist “country image” and “useful relations”

An important argument in deciding to authorize the Hungarian pastors to attend the Second Vatican Council was that the bishops by their mere presence would refute Western propaganda about the “Church of Silence” and prove that in Hungary the Church operated freely.¹¹⁴ Although Rome, too, could clearly see that only the members of the Hungarian Church loyal to the state had received places within the deputation departing for the Council,¹¹⁵ the unexpected appearance of the Hungarian delegates at the first session truly improved the perception of Hungary. From the events of the first council session as well as international statements, the January 4, 1963 bulletin of the State Office for Church Affairs drew the conclusion that the participation of the socialist countries, and specifically the Hungarian bishops, had been

correct. According to the evaluation of the Hungarian church policy leaders, the “cold-war circles” had not counted on the arrival of delegations from the socialist countries. Their attendance therefore “had a paralyzing effect on the extremist elements and particularly hindered the emigration’s slanders since at the sight of the bishops who had arrived they could no longer effectively sell their lies about their imprisonment and persecution.” Beyond this, the bulletin stressed that by attending the Council the Communist parties’ prestige and the influence of the Communist mass movement had been increased.¹¹⁶

Based on the changed international political situation and the positive experiences of the first session, in 1963 the leaders of ecclesiastical policy decided to broaden the Catholic Church’s international ties. In the assessment of the Hungarian party leaders, as a consequence of the Western churches’ “tactical shift” (i.e., acceptance of peaceful co-existence and the “ideological slackening” that had commenced parallel to this) “in ecclesiastical policy the fight against reaction and the activation of the Church are shifting more and more to the area of international contacts.” In this new situation, the increased coordination of foreign policy and church policy was seen as necessary. As part of this, under the guidance of the ÁEH, the goal of broadening, through the prelates attending the Council and other priests of “positive attitude,” the already existing official and personal contacts with those Vatican and other ecclesiastical leaders who were adherents of the “new line” was formulated in relation to the Vatican. Furthermore, deepening relations was also seen as an outstanding opportunity to have the most influential figures of the Catholic Church accept the status quo in Hungarian ecclesiastical policy.¹¹⁷

In building ecclesiastical ties urged by Hungarian church policy, it was regarded as especially important to exploit the possibilities presented by Vatican II, but regardless of this, plans were made from the beginning to have Hungarian priests who supported the regime travel to Rome and to invite “progressive-minded” Western ecclesiastical figures to Hungary.¹¹⁸ In the following year attempts were made to support the program on building the churches’ international ties also through procedures to ease travel into and out of the country. In this way, it was therefore no coincidence that the chairman of the ÁEH sent the bulletin about the resolution on this issue adopted by the Council of Ministers on August 13, 1964 not only to the chief

rapporteurs for ecclesiastical affairs operating in the counties, but also to the leaders of the churches.¹¹⁹

From the start, the prelates traveling to attend the Council were expected to take advantage of the opportunities to meet with the bishops of other nations and try to obtain contacts that might also prove fruitful politically.¹²⁰ Nevertheless, for a long time those guiding Hungarian church policy urged the Hungarian council fathers to make contact and coordinate their activity with the bishops of the other socialist countries, but to no avail. In fact, the Hungarian bishops explicitly avoided contact with the bishops of other nations.¹²¹ They built the greatest number of contacts with the prelates from Czechoslovakia, among whom several also spoke Hungarian well. A brief meeting with them had occurred already during the first session.¹²² Beginning with the second session, meanwhile, it was first of all Brezanóczy who maintained contact with Eduard Oliva, the vicar capitular of Litoměřice, and István Záreczky, canon of Bratislava,¹²³ but the other members of the delegation as well as the attendants, met with one another several times in order to discuss common problems.¹²⁴

The failure to establish contact with the Polish bishops, on the other hand, depended not so much on the Hungarians as the aloofness of the Poles. Already during the second session certain Hungarian attendants had made an unsuccessful attempt to coordinate the activities of the Hungarian and Polish council delegations,¹²⁵ but even later on they managed to hold just a single banquet in honor of the Polish bishops. At this gathering the main topic of conversation was the Hungarian assistance lent to the Poles during the Second World War.¹²⁶ Apart from accepting the luncheon invitation the Polish episcopate rigidly kept their distance from the Hungarians, not even inviting them to the 1966 jubilee celebration commemorating one thousand years of Christianity in Poland.¹²⁷ As in the case of the Poles, the Hungarians also had quite little communication with the Yugoslav bishops, who overwhelmingly advocated a conservative position and who likewise did not seek the opportunity to meet.¹²⁸ One of the rare meetings took place during the third session, when one of the Yugoslav bishops paid a visit to Endre Hamvas.¹²⁹

Finally, among those arriving from the countries of the Socialist Bloc Károly Pakocs, archepiscopal vicar of Szatmár who was representing the Catholic bishops of Romania at the Council with two others, was also hosted by the Hungarian chief pastors at a luncheon. The Hungarian prelate from

Romania related to Sándor Klempa, among other things, the reason why Bishop Áron Márton of Gyulafehérvár did not come to the Council: “he did not accept the opportunity to travel to Rome. When he was asked why, the response was: because there I could speak only ill of you.”¹³⁰

In terms of Hungarian church policy, more important than making contacts with the chief pastors of the socialist countries was building relations with the “progressive-minded” bishops of western countries and maintaining them both during the intervals between sessions and after the Council. For it was the “Western modernist ecclesiastical figures” who were considered the most suitable subjects for obtaining support for Hungarian church, domestic and foreign policy.¹³¹ At the same time, nor was it a negligible circumstance that from an operational standpoint (from the perspective of state security), too, it was the preeminent western church figures who ranked as the most promising contacts.

The possibility of establishing ties with the “progressive circles” of the French Church, for example, had been raised already prior to the Council. Among other things, based on the experiences of Abbé Jean Boulier’s trip to Hungary and the conversation of the press attaché at the Hungarian embassy in Paris with the manager of *Témoignage chrétien* the leaders of Hungarian church policy concluded that there was a group within the French episcopate who were opposed to rigid attitude and were seeking to make contact with “moderately progressive” ecclesiastical circles in the socialist countries.¹³² By the opening of the Council, however, the analyses needed for proposing the planned French-Hungarian cooperation had not been prepared.¹³³ In addition, because of the Hungarian bishops’ inactivity, and due to linguistic barriers, substantive communication between the two delegations did not take place during the first two sessions.

More serious ties with the French council fathers began to be constructed only during the third session, after György Vitányi, who spoke French well, traveled to Rome in the entourage of the Hungarian delegation, which had been expanded with the new bishops. Following orders received from above and exploiting his existing contacts, this leading figure of the peace priest movement managed to have the members of the two episcopates host one another. While on the Hungarian side Vitányi practically monopolized the conversation in order to portray the situation of the Hungarian Church in accordance with the state’s expectations, the French bishops, who assumed

an active part in the elaboration of Schema 13, attempted to supply the Hungarians with arguments about how to comment on the draft document "The Church in the World."¹³⁴ The French bishops displayed a lively interest in the situation of the Hungarian Church likewise during the fourth session and raised the possibility of maintaining future contacts by inviting the Hungarian bishops to France as well as promising to visit Hungary themselves during their trip to Poland in 1966.¹³⁵

Although the German bishops tried to approach the Hungarians already at the second session, it was likewise only during the third session that the newly appointed Hungarian bishops began to establish relations with them. For the Hungarian state, in this case, too, the primary purpose of the contact was to increase the renown of the socialist regime by appropriately presenting the "good relations" between Church and state. It was soon noticed, however, that the significance of any potential Hungarian influence paled in comparison to the impact the German bishops exerted on the Hungarian chief pastors in the spiritual and political realms under the pretext of the material support promised to the Hungarian Church, among other things. This recognition made it desirable to loosen German–Hungarian ties by the fourth session.¹³⁶

Within the aspiration to form relations with the various "progressive" church figures, contacts with the Brazilian episcopate occupied a unique place. Already during the first session the Hungarian bishops had frequently communicated with the Brazilian council fathers, whom the Holy See had likewise lodged in the *Domus Mariae*. The chairman of the ÁEH already in the first evaluations called these contacts "politically advantageous."¹³⁷ The Hungarian minister to Rome, József Száll, also urged fostering the Brazilian acquaintances because he regarded the socially sensitive bishops of the Third World particularly suitable for improving Hungary's image abroad.¹³⁸ Despite the intentions of the Hungarian state leaders, during the second session the Hungarian delegates essentially made no effort to approach the Brazilians.¹³⁹ As in the other instances, they began to cultivate more intensive ties with the Brazilian chief pastors only starting with the third session.¹⁴⁰

The leaders of church policy attempted to exploit the opportunities offered by the Council independently of the council fathers' activities. In the wake of the experiences of the first session, plans quickly emerged that aimed to utilize the new contacts. The State Office for Church Affairs, for example, came

forward with a recommendation that eminent figures in the Catholic Church travel to Western countries already prior to the opening of the Council's second session "for the purpose of becoming better informed and cultivating positive contacts."¹⁴¹ Thus, to ensure success, these journeys were organized in tandem with the state security organs and allowed first and foremost agents to be sent out.

Apart from the individual trips, pilgrimages, organized under state guidance and related to the Council to varying degrees played a similar role. Prior to the first session the true goal of the pilgrimage to Lourdes, for example, was for its members to obtain news about the Council, "plant appropriate instruction" about the situation of the Hungarian Church, and inform the Vatican through progressive French church leaders that the appointment of Hungarian bishops could take place only in the event that the Holy See acknowledged Hungarian laws.¹⁴² Those leading church policy considered the trips of such pilgrim groups, consisting overwhelmingly of peace priests, subsequently useful and successful¹⁴³ despite the fact that during the second council session Casaroli pointed out in connection with one of the groups traveling to Rome that peace priest pilgrimages of this kind create the impression that the Hungarian state were seeking to place persons who were in no way acceptable to the Holy See at the forefront.¹⁴⁴

As early as 1960 the Hungarian political leadership devoted a role in shaping a more positive image of the socialist regime in the West to the émigrés visiting home.¹⁴⁵ Here, too, it wanted to take advantage of the new ecclesiastical contacts made during the Second Vatican Council. One report on the second session straightforwardly stated that there were several among the new acquaintances who "after the invitation to come to Hungary could be used to paint a favorable picture of the Hungarian situation in the West."¹⁴⁶ The "target persons" emerged first of all from among those "modernist ecclesiastical figures" with whom the Hungarian council fathers had come into contact in the manner presented above.¹⁴⁷ In the interest of exploiting the Brazilian connections, for example, a recommendation was made for Endre Hamvas to invite Cardinal Archbishop Carlos Carmelo de Vasconcelos Motta of São Paulo to visit Hungary before or after the third session. The Franciscan Provincial Prior Béla Váradi for his part was to accept the invitation of the Brazilian Franciscans and reciprocate by inviting a three-member delegation of Brazilian priests to Hungary.¹⁴⁸ It was with a similarly

propagandistic goal that plans were made to have the National Peace Council invite Canon John Collins, leader of the nuclear disarmament movement. In turn *Actio Catholica* and the Catholic press would host Henri Fesquet, editor of the Catholic column of *Le Monde*, as well as a three-member delegation from the weekly *Témoignage chrétien*.¹⁴⁹

The detailed accounts of the events indicate that those in charge of Hungarian (church) policy, in addition to urging travels out of and into the country, placed particular emphasis on the receptions organized during the Council by the Hungarian embassy in Rome in honor of the Hungarian council fathers. In the first year the initiative had limited success because of the mistrust of the Holy See and the council fathers and the Hungarian embassy's fear of failure. As a matter of course, the embassy invited only persons who were certain to appear. Thus, apart from Cardinals Giacomo Lercaro and Augustin Bea, who were regarded as the leading figures of the "progressive" wing, the members of the Curia did not receive invitations. Among the Hungarian émigrés, too, the invitees included only the Piarist Superior General Vince Tomek, Prelate Gyula Magyary and Franciscan confessor Raymund Rákos, who were considered moderates. Contrary to expectations, however, the cardinals (Bea, Lercaro, and König, whom Hamvas personally invited) did not appear. Among the bishops of the socialist countries only the Czechoslovaks and Lithuanians attended the reception. Apart from them, among the invited ecclesiastics only one Brazilian archbishop came with four bishops and attendants, as well as one French bishop.¹⁵⁰

Following the fiasco of the previous year, attempts were made to prepare the embassy reception held during the second session more thoroughly.¹⁵¹ József Száll judged the event, which was eventually postponed one week because of President Kennedy's death, expressly successful: of the 280 invited guests some came despite the fact that the institution of Latin American Catholics in Rome was dedicated in the presence of the pope on the afternoon of that very same day (November 30, 1963), and that the pontiff had summoned the experts (*periti*) attending the Council and the superiors general of the religious orders for an audience during the time of the reception.¹⁵²

Compared with the previous ones, the receptions organized during the third and fourth sessions can be classified as expressly successful.¹⁵³ In this the Vatican–Hungarian partial agreement signed prior to the third session, which

significantly increased the prestige of the Hungarian state, had a major role. At the same time, the agreement rendered obsolete those considerations because of which several had declined to attend on the previous occasions. In fact, the Holy See and the Hungarian emigration had also grasped that the receptions organized by the Hungarian embassy were intended to legitimize the government in Budapest. For example, according to the information of Hungarian intelligence, Brazilian episcopal secretary Helder Pessôa Câmara was warned during the second session by Gyula Tóth, a Hungarian-born employee of the Secretariat of State, not to attend the reception.¹⁵⁴ Cardinals König and Motta, in turn, were convinced at the Secretariat of State by the argument that it was not proper to attend a reception at the embassy of the state where their fellow cardinal, Mindszenty, was not allowed to function freely.¹⁵⁵ It was similar considerations that had also kept Casaroli away from the earlier receptions: because of reports circulating in the press about the Vatican–Hungarian negotiations he reached an agreement with the minister to Rome that despite his original intention he would not participate in the event, lest his presence confirm the various reports.¹⁵⁶

It is evident from the above that although the decision to allow the bishops to participate in the Council had improved the international perception of Hungary, during the first two sessions no spectacular advances occurred. It was the partial agreement signed on September 15, 1964, the result of the Vatican–Hungarian negotiations, that brought about the decisive turn. By signing the document the Holy See on the one hand tacitly accepted the status quo and thereby legitimized the Hungarian Communist regime.¹⁵⁷ On the other hand through the newly appointed, younger bishops who had good language skills the Hungarian Church's foreign-policy activities increased. Beyond the two Hungarian-related factors it was partly the international situation, which had taken a favorable turn as a consequence of the Vatican's new eastern policy, that led to the Hungarian People's Republic now possessing serious prestige by the third and fourth sessions. The change, which was set in motion by the decision to permit the Hungarian council fathers to attend, and accelerated with the signing of the partial agreement, is faithfully reflected in the receptions organized in honor of the Hungarian council fathers: whereas during the first two council sessions only a smaller number of guests (and less prestigious ones at that)

attended the events, during the last two sessions a large number of ecclesiastical personages (among them cardinals as well as some leading figures of Vatican diplomacy and the Council) now accepted the Hungarian embassy's invitations. Beyond the number of attendees the international acceptance of Hungarian (ecclesiastical) policy was shown unequivocally by the fact that following the reception in the fall of 1964 the representatives of the episcopates enjoying more significant international prestige expressed their admiration to the Hungarian bishops for the latter's loyal attitude to the socialist state.¹⁵⁸

2.2.3. The suppression of the "conservative-integrist wing"

In addition to obtaining information about the work of Vatican II and the Holy See's political plans, as well as increasing the prestige of the Hungarian People's Republic, a third factor in permitting the Hungarian bishops' to attend the Council was the hope that through them the Council's decisions and the Vatican's eastern policy could be influenced in a way advantageous to the socialist regime.

The primary goal was to prevent and ward off attacks against socialism. As had already been seen, prior to the Council the socialist states had attempted to obtain guarantees from the Holy See that in return for ensuring attendance the Council would not put the solemn condemnation of Communism on the agenda.¹⁵⁹ Nevertheless, despite the Council's pastoral nature and the express pledges of the Holy See, as a consequence of the Council's freedom the possibility of a solemn condemnation of, or at least another attack on the Socialist Bloc and Communism, could not be ruled out until the last session. Because in the council hall the "conservative-integrist" wing advocated the view that Communism or, in a broader sense, Marxism, must be condemned, those direct church policy in the socialist countries were in agreement throughout that "on the Catholic front the task in the international sphere is to assist in ousting extreme right-wing circles and support politically positive forces."¹⁶⁰

In order to preempt discriminatory moves against the socialist countries, already in the summer of 1962 an attempt was made via a group of clerical pilgrims traveling to France to "make" the Holy See's competent authorities

“believe” through the French episcopate “that the efficacy of the Second Vatican Council is dubious applied to the RC churches within the socialist countries, should local peculiarities be disregarded. The Vatican must reckon with the special situation of these churches, which have no possibility of stepping outside the given historical framework.”¹⁶¹ Likewise from the beginning the Hungarian bishops traveling to the Council were designated the assignment of “counterbalancing the actions of extreme forces in the Council and in the Vatican as their possibilities allow.”¹⁶²

The state security organs wished to prevent possible attacks against the Hungarian regime and the departing bishops in the manner agreed upon at the Warsaw conference by, among other things, spreading “disinformation.”¹⁶³ Already prior to the first session a recommendation had been drafted which proposed compiling disinformation materials by using reliable church agents. According to the document the Vatican’s competent authorities had to be warned “that every effort which does not take into account the laws of the Hungarian People’s Republic is from the outset doomed to failure,” and for this reason a “sober outlook and attitude realistically appraising the situation in Hungary” was needed on the part of the Church’s leaders.¹⁶⁴

Throughout the Council’s entire duration preventing the creation of the perceived “anti-Communist Christian united front” by operational means was likewise kept on the agenda. Even in preparation for the third session Hungarian state security—following the common socialist stance adopted prior to the Council¹⁶⁵—regarded hindering the Vatican’s “ambition as an ally of the imperialist forces to form an anti-Communist united front with the various churches” by diverting the “attention” of the Holy See’s “organizations producing and directing propaganda” in another direction as one of its most important tasks.¹⁶⁶

Apart from the various notables in the Curia and the conservative-minded council fathers, the main initiators of attacks against the Communist regimes were the Catholic priests who had emigrated from the socialist countries. To influence (council) opinion, for example, they organized a large-scale exhibition about the “Church of Silence,” which presented in detail the socialist countries’ policy of church persecution.¹⁶⁷ A similar goal was served also by the statement disseminated in English and Italian among the council fathers, in which the émigré Hungarian pastors criticized the

partial agreement between the Hungarian People's Republic and the Holy See.¹⁶⁸ At the same time, articles appearing in the émigré Catholic press, *Katolikus Szemle* and *Új Hungária*, as well as programs of the Hungarian broadcast of Vatican Radio criticizing the Hungarian priests and the Hungarian government's church policy were addressed to the narrower—Hungarian—public.¹⁶⁹

However, it was the émigré priests' influence on the Vatican's policies and on the council fathers of the socialist countries that ranked as a far greater danger than their activities in shaping the public mood. Support of the "progressive forces" within the Council and the Vatican and the isolation of "reactionary circles" consequently was most closely tied to the demand to isolate the émigré priests and disconnect them from the Vatican's decision-making processes. However, the Hungarian council fathers received in vain the task of trying to restrict the activity of the Hungarian émigré priests during the Council; the Hungarian authorities repeatedly had to face the fact that, on the contrary, it was the émigré priests who were drawing the Hungarian council fathers and their companions under their influence.¹⁷⁰

For the Hungarian authorities it was the circumstances surrounding the origin of the final point of the *nota verbale* presented by the Secretariat of State at the end of the first session that best proved the influence exerted by the Hungarian émigrés on the council fathers. The point concerning a "Vatican envoy," which, as has already been seen, was a peculiarity of the Vatican document drafted for the Hungarians, was the result not least of the activities of István Mester and József Zágon. It was they in fact who persuaded the Hungarian council fathers to request in their written submission the dispatch of a Vatican visitor to Hungary, an idea that was also raised at the Secretariat of State.¹⁷¹

Following the experiences of the first session the Hungarian authorities identified two primary reasons for the émigrés' influence on the council delegation and their intermediary role between the Hungarian council fathers and the Holy See. They believed it would be possible to change these by eliminating the "institutional" character of the emigration's mediating role, that is, by withdrawing the émigré István Mester's commission as the Hungarian bishops' Rome representative. Thus, for the second session the episcopate was made to appoint an agent, codenamed "János Kiss" and selected jointly by the State Office for Church Affairs and the Interior Ministry,

as their spokesman in Rome. However, the new appointee, partly because of the mistrust on the part of the Holy See, and partly because he lacked a network of contacts, was unable to fulfill his assignment satisfactorily despite his every effort. Situations occurred repeatedly when the Hungarian council fathers depended on the help of the émigré leaders, who had local knowledge, practice and extensive connections, even if the émigrés were forced to acknowledge their marginalization and in protest did not turn up to serve the Hungarian council delegation. The failure to completely isolate the émigrés is further indicated by the fact that though the Vatican accepted Timkó's commission (albeit with reservations), the official Vatican organs frequently used the émigrés Mester, Csertő, and Gyula Tóth as intermediaries to the Hungarian council fathers. Casaroli himself ordinarily summoned the bishops through Mester, and so—following the Holy See's example—the bishops did not make use of Timkó's services either.¹⁷²

In addition to the emigration's "institutional" role as intermediary, during the first session it was the council delegation's lack of self-reliant infrastructural background that represented the difficulty. Lacking adequate material and technical means (e.g., a car), as well as local and (in many cases) linguistic knowledge, the members of the Hungarian delegation depended on the émigrés' help not only in the area of communication with the Holy See. To remove this obstacle, beginning with the second session, the Hungarian authorities and the political leadership increasingly made certain that the Hungarian council delegates received all of these services from the Hungarian embassy in Rome. Thus they strove to better supply them with money and placed the embassy's cars and drivers at their disposal; and by organizing various excursions the embassy also tried to take care of how weekend days off were spent. All of these measures contributed to the council fathers making increasingly less use of the émigré priests' services from the second session on. However, even then the emigration's intermediary role could not be completely cut off.¹⁷³

From the point of view of achieving the goals of church policy, perhaps more important than countering the influence of the emigration on the Hungarian delegation was discrediting the émigré priests in the eyes of the Holy See and excluding them from Vatican decision-making. Therefore, from the beginning the Hungarian bishops had to advocate the position that it was the chief pastors working in the country who knew the possibilities

of the life of the Hungarian Church best. For this reason they were expected to do all they could to make certain the Holy See based its decisions first of all on their information.¹⁷⁴ Nevertheless, the Hungarian authorities correctly assumed that the Vatican would treat any news coming from the Hungarian prelates who arrived in Rome with reservations. In this way, to cut off the emigration and influence Vatican eastern policy it was not enough for the Hungarian council fathers to brief the Vatican in a way that conformed to the government's expectations. For this reason the achievement of the designated aims of church policy was supported throughout by operational means as well.¹⁷⁵

In the interest of weakening the emigration's role the means of subversion and disinformation were deployed. Based on the millennia-old principle of "divide and rule" state security with the help of the deployed agents, sought first and foremost to uncover the internal fault lines of the émigré group and attempted to magnify the prevailing differences in how Hungarian affairs were perceived.¹⁷⁶ Furthermore, the campaigns organized to subvert the clerical emigration by discrediting its leaders.¹⁷⁷

While the internal weakening of the emigration served the purpose of excluding the émigré priests from the decision-making in the Holy See only indirectly, the spreading of appropriate disinformation aimed to achieve this directly. Efforts were made to push the emigration to the background in part by planning to deliver to the Vatican through various channels information warning the Holy See's competent organs that the émigrés' "church-policy orientation" was "unrealistic," and that their advice in most cases caused difficulty for the Church in Hungary.¹⁷⁸ To elaborate the disinformatonal materials, which were to be prepared with the help of agents "Kövér," "Puskás" and "Takács," in such a way that they "would reverberate with concern for the Church, the strengthening of its unity, and harmony with the progressive tendency in the Vatican" they recommended raising the following examples of the negative consequences to be expected from listening to the emigration's "intimations": 1. The hostile measures against the Hungarian government could result in the end of the continued operation of the Benedictine gymnasium in Pannonhalma and the Franciscan gymnasium in Szentendre; 2. More bishops and experts would be allowed out to attend the later sessions only if the Vatican took a positive attitude towards Hungary; 3. In the event of hostile conduct by the Holy See, the government—citing illegal ordinations

of priests—might conceivably merge the seminaries in Esztergom and Budapest; 4. In the event that Hungarian–Vatican relations took an unfavorable turn the state would probably yield to the demand of the Protestant churches, which were urging that recognition of the doctorate in Catholic theology be eliminated.¹⁷⁹

The available data indicate that the planned disinformational materials—at least in part—did in fact reach the Holy See. Among the state security documents, for example, can be found a letter, addressed to the Council Secretariat, which depicts the situation of the Church in Hungary in a positive light (religious life was good; religiosity was more conscious as a result of atheistic propaganda; religious education was functioning), while at the same time urging more understanding on the part of the Vatican: the faithful were asking why certain sees were vacant; why the Hungarian state was not recognized at the Vatican.¹⁸⁰ The fact that Casaroli in a memorandum addressed to the Hungarian minister to Rome mentioned among the Holy See's grievances the supposedly scheduled closing of four operating boarding schools (Budapest, Győr, Kecskemét, Szentendre), further demonstrates that the above disinformation materials reached their target.¹⁸¹

These materials were not sent to émigré priests;¹⁸² however by intentionally misinforming them concerning other issues the Hungarian authorities strove to prepare the way for the Hungarian bishops and negotiating team to point out again and again the distorted, tendentious nature of the emigration's reports. Such was for example the false rumor spread during the first session, which alleged that 53 priests had been arrested in Hungary. The émigré priests saw in the information confirmation of their negative view of the Hungarian Church's situation and used it in an attempt to slow down, as it were, the Holy See's intention to achieve rapprochement. First the Hungarian council fathers and later the members of the Hungarian negotiating delegation, were able to use the easily refutable fabrication as further evidence of "the damage coming from the tendentious distortions" of the emigration.¹⁸³

Despite its various efforts Hungarian state security was forced to conclude that "it did not succeed in damaging the emigration's credibility with disinformation materials."¹⁸⁴ On the other hand, it did succeed partly in carrying out plans for the marginalization of the emigration within the framework of the Vatican–Hungarian bilateral negotiations. Already

beginning with the first negotiations with Casaroli, the Hungarian side had included among the negotiating points the question of excluding the emigration and tried to exert pressure directly on the Holy See through the arguments articulated in the disinformational materials. The Hungarian negotiating delegation again urged bypassing the emigration, emphasizing that the restoration of direct ties with the Hungarian Church had made the emigration's previous mediating role superfluous, since "it was the leaders of the Hungarian Church, and not the emigration and other hostile personalities, who could give proper information."¹⁸⁵

From the point of view of marginalizing the emigration, ultimately it was the campaign concerning the Pontifical Hungarian Institute, gradually coordinated between the state security service and the State Office for Church Affairs beginning with the second session, that proved the most successful. Although in his memorandum on the experiences of first session Pál Brezanóczy had indicated that "the idea of sending out theologians to the universities there as well—after possible deliberation—had been raised in Rome,"¹⁸⁶ over the subsequent months this proposal was not dealt with at all in the ÁEH. In the negotiations with the Holy See's representative on May 7–9, 1963, the desire to slow down the hostile emigration was still discussed only in general terms, independently of the fate of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute.¹⁸⁷ For the next round of negotiations, on October 1–5, 1963, the Hungarian side touched upon the issue of returning the institute only "timidly," "without the slightest commitment,"¹⁸⁸ because in the eyes of church-policy leaders the matter of the institute at this time was still only of interest in terms of isolating the emigration. Because permission from headquarters was late in arriving,¹⁸⁹ however, the recommendation by the state security organs asking the ÁEH to request during the negotiations the return of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute (since this would have been advantageous in terms of embedding agents) was ignored. Based on a new, detailed memorandum prepared by state security for the Hungarian negotiating team, the recommendation that henceforth the return of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute to the Hungarian Church's ownership must be urged was finally inserted into the account summarizing the results of the negotiations heretofore on October 22, 1963.¹⁹⁰ Following the consultations, in the draft agreement of June 25, 1964 Casaroli now accepted the solution regarding the institute.¹⁹¹ Thus, under the terms of the partial agreement signed September

15, 1964, the émigré leaders handed over the institute to the representatives of the Hungarian Church on November 5.¹⁹²

Nevertheless, the Hungarian émigré priests could not be completely isolated or silenced even with the recovery of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute, and thus intelligence would continue to devote heightened attention to the conflicts and problems existing within the emigration, the polarizing processes emerging among them, as well as efforts to make their activity impossible. However, thanks to the handover of the institute, as well as the ongoing Vatican–Hungarian negotiations, the continuation of the campaign against the emigration subsequently became increasingly independent of Vatican II. Although, based on the information obtained earlier, during the Council the émigré leaders’ campaign criticizing the Holy See’s eastern policy was successfully neutralized in a few cases,¹⁹³ they were unable to thwart the establishment of a new émigré center—and thereby further weaken the emigration—in spite of all their intentions.¹⁹⁴

Nor did the bilateral negotiations succeed in making the emigration’s existence impossible either. The Hungarian side attempted to blackmail the Vatican by claiming that further agreements would become impossible unless the latter did something to silence the emigration,¹⁹⁵ but in vain, since the Holy See was not willing to set aside the critical but loyal priests and at most changed their posts, withdrawing them from the direct management of Hungarian affairs. István Mester, for example, already in the fall of 1964 was transferred within the Sacred Consistorial Congregation to a position where he did not deal with Hungarian-related issues.¹⁹⁶ For his part, József Zágon was promoted to secretary of the “Supreme Council for Emigration” in 1967, with the result that he was no longer specially in charge of Hungarian affairs.¹⁹⁷ To obtain information and when managing delicate, Hungarian-related matters the Holy See nevertheless made use of the services of the émigrés subsequently as well.¹⁹⁸ For example, during the negotiations with Cardinal Mindszenty, in 1971 József Zágon, and later, in 1972, Sándor Csertő were asked to mediate between the Holy See and the Hungarian cardinal.¹⁹⁹

2.2.4. The “support of positive forces”

Simultaneously with the “suppression of extreme right-wing circles,” the “support of the Council’s politically positive forces” ranked as the most important task to be achieved through attendance. Essentially this meant supporting initiatives, recommendations and resolutions—overwhelmingly connected to the so-called “progressive” faction—that aligned with the interests of the socialist countries, as well as appropriately informing the Holy See’s decision-makers. In positively influencing the Council and Vatican policy the biggest task fell to the council delegation, and specifically the bishops. From the spring of 1963 on, however, direct negotiations between the Hungarian state and the Holy See also played an important role in this.

Apart from voting “progressive” recommendations,²⁰⁰ support for the “progressive” wing of the Council could be realized primarily by making statements that aligned with the state’s intentions. Such was Endre Hamvas’s intervention immediately at the first session in the debate on the message to humanity. As opposed to Cardinal Giuseppe Antonio Ferretto, who advocated the position that the “Church of Silence” should be referred to unmistakably in the message, the bishop of Csanád suggested that it would be more proper to keep quiet about the persecutions, because mentioning them only causes the Church harm. Instead, Hamvas called attention to the signs of improvement and cautioned patience.²⁰¹ The Hungarian intervention also had a role in Cardinal Ferretto’s recommendation not being adopted and in no changes ultimately being made to the ominous paragraph in the text of the document *Charitas Christi urget nos*.²⁰²

Nevertheless, the Hungarian bishops subsequently lacked a similar willingness to take the initiative, speaking up “almost only at the embassy’s prodding.”²⁰³ Apart from the inactivity the Hungarian authorities also complained that the interventions were often almost completely apolitical.²⁰⁴ In their judgment, the subjects of ecumenism, religious freedom and religious education, as well as the “Church in the Modern World” would have presented an opportunity to make politically-themed statements. On the question of ecumenism the leaders of church policy would have expected the Hungarian bishops, in the interest of slowing down the aspirations for unity, to point out: the vigorous resistance appearing on the part of the Protestant churches should be considered, as well as how much unity with the priests of the “more left-wing

denominations” would serve the cause of the Catholic Church. In connection with the issue of religious freedom and religious education, the regime urged the bishops to refute the rumors about administrative measures restricting the internal freedom of the Church and to testify to the fact that in Hungary religious education was offered in schools. Finally, in the debate on Schema 13 the state wished the Hungarian council fathers to press for a distinction between atheism and Communism. At the same time, they were expected to point out that hostility to the regime would not eliminate Communism as well as take firm action in favour of disarmament and peace.²⁰⁵

The Hungarian political leadership positively evaluated the remarks Hamvas made during the third session, in which, emphasizing Pope John XXIII's merits, he explained: “We must turn with equal interest—without any prejudice—towards both East and West, as befits Christ's eternal Church, which is linked to neither forms of state nor economic systems.”²⁰⁶ The government similarly welcomed the fact that during the fourth session the Hungarian prelates had spoken up in favor of peace, disarmament and the banning of all atomic weapons. They also raised their voices in favor of engaging in dialogue for the sake of humanity.²⁰⁷ Although the Council did not adopt it without changes, Bishop Brezanóczy's proposal recommending the creation of a central ecclesiastical peace organization and a solemn condemnation of atomic and total war was considered especially significant. Taking the above into account the leadership of the Hungarian state judged that the Hungarian bishops “by their remarks and activity not only supported the wing professing progressive views but also provided practical experience regarding proper cooperation.”²⁰⁸

The leaders of Hungarian church policy expected the Hungarian bishops not only to support the Council's “progressive wing” but also to influence favorably the Vatican decision-makers by assuming a stance which conformed to state interests. Already from the very first council session the Hungarian council fathers were assigned the task of conducting talks with the Holy See's competent authorities on a few open questions concerning church policy (among others, on the Mindszenty question and the appointment of new bishops) and forcing the start of direct dialogue between the Vatican and the Hungarian People's Republic.²⁰⁹

At the first session “supporting the positive forces” participating in Vatican decision-making was still primarily the task of the Hungarian

council fathers. From the spring of 1963 on, however, a significant change could be witnessed in the division of labor: starting from the commencement of direct negotiations an increasingly larger role in influencing the Holy See's policy was allotted to the negotiating delegation and diplomats of the Hungarian government, while the bishops assumed a reduced or complementary role.

Therefore, the fact that already at the first session the Hungarian council fathers, in accordance with expectations, successfully pressed for the commencement of direct Vatican-Hungarian negotiations would subsequently be of decisive importance.²¹⁰ However, despite the fact that the Holy See showed its willingness to establish the direct contacts the Hungarian government was also urging, and to this end indicated that its emissary would arrive in Hungary, presumably in March, the government in Budapest, as has already been seen, postponed the commencement of bilateral talks for a time.²¹¹ The Hungarian government's stalling tactics discernible over the months preceding the start of negotiations again confirm that its wish to try to use the direct negotiations to influence Vatican policy as well. Although originally the Hungarian political leadership out of various considerations had cast its vote likewise in favor of pursuing dialogue, in the eyes of the political (and church policy) leadership a potential trip by an apostolic visitor to Hungary, seemed to be a danger that should be avoided at all costs. At the same time, rejecting the opportunity offered by the Holy See involved the danger that the conservative cardinals could use this to justify their previous rigid attitude. For this reason, already beginning with the first council session it was clear that negotiation with the special envoy must be accepted, though it appeared advisable to postpone the start of this as long as possible. The Hungarian government therefore assumed a wait-and-see posture: while not refusing to receive the Vatican envoy in principle, it did not take the initiative either, wishing instead to react positively only if the Vatican should repeatedly urge this. This tactic not only provided an opportunity to successfully clarify in the meantime the actual jurisdiction of the Vatican emissary; at the same time, by avoiding haste, they hoped also to enhance their bargaining position. Stalling in fact could create the appearance that a resolution to the issues concerning the Church was important primarily to the Holy See, which was pushing for the negotiations, whereas this was by no means a question of vital importance to the Hungarian government.²¹²

One of the most difficult issues hampering relations between the Holy See and the Hungarian People's Republic was the resolution of Cardinal Mindszenty's case. As was alluded to above, for the sake of reaching a rapid settlement of the cardinal's case, the Hungarian political leadership entrusted the departing bishops with informing the Vatican about the Hungarian position on the issue. Simultaneously, they were instructed to point out that Mindszenty's departure from the American embassy was first and foremost in the Church's interest.²¹³ The Hungarian council fathers, who also believed that concluding the Mindszenty affair would improve the situation of the Hungarian Church independently of the state's directives, seized every opportunity to discuss a resolution to the matter.

The attempts by the Hungarian council fathers to expedite a resolution to the Mindszenty case in the first session ended in failure, however. Nonetheless, ensuring Cardinal König's trip to Budapest, scheduled for the spring of 1963, continued to fuel the hope that the issue would be settled soon. The Hungarian government trusted at any rate that the chief task of the Viennese cardinal was to persuade Mindszenty to depart. At this time, in fact, settling the matter as soon as possible was expressly in the government's interest.²¹⁴ On April 2, 1963 Kádár highlighted two arguments which conveyed the urgency of the issue: on the one hand it would have suited the Italian Communist Party if an agreement on the Mindszenty question could be reached with the Vatican prior to the Italian elections scheduled for the spring of 1963; on the other hand, news of the worsening illness of the pope, who supported resolving the issue, likewise served as a warning that the matter should be wrapped up as soon as possible.²¹⁵

König's trip to Budapest did not bring about progress, however. Beyond the considerations mentioned above, this, too, almost certainly contributed to the Hungarian political leadership's decision to break with its stalling tactics concerning the reception of the Vatican visitor and show its willingness to take up negotiations as soon as possible. The Hungarian government considered a settlement of the Mindszenty affair so urgent that it even committed a tactical error: in the first discussion with Casaroli, conducted between May 7 and 9, 1963, after the Vatican envoy to their surprise did not mention the Mindszenty affair, the negotiators of the State Office for Church Affairs raised it.²¹⁶ With this initiative the Hungarian side was temporarily put at a disadvantage. In vain did they later attempt to improve on this

impression,²¹⁷ the Secretariat of State drew the conclusion that resolving the issue was not without interest to the Hungarian government. This strengthened the view that the Mindszenty case must be settled in connection with the resolution of the Church's other grievances.²¹⁸

John XXIII (perhaps keeping in sight the case of Josyp Slipyi) continued to advocate the view that the Mindszenty affair—even independently of the other points raised during the negotiations—must be settled, moreover, in such a way that the Hungarian cardinal would receive a post in the Curia.²¹⁹ In the course of 1963, on the other hand, the Secretariat of State attempted to use the Mindszenty case to obtain as many concessions as possible from the Hungarian government in exchange for its resolution. This thinking was reflected earlier also when Paul VI, during an audience granted to Hamvas and Brezanóczy shortly after his election, emphasized that in resolving the Mindszenty question, among the interests of the cardinal, the Hungarian government and the Church it was above all this last that had to be considered.²²⁰ This was likewise the goal of the negotiating tactics, the bases of which Casaroli outlined already after the first discussions: while no final agreement could be reached without resolving the Mindszenty question, negotiations must be commenced on other topics.²²¹

Learning from its previous mistake, naturally the Hungarian political leadership also elaborated its own negotiating strategy. The Hungarians judged it useful that the Vatican's representative had declared the government's conditions acceptable, and in agreement with the Hungarian position had linked the resolution of the Mindszenty affair with the general settlement of the issues,²²² though he regarded it improper to press for the resolution. As the Hungarians saw the situation, the Holy See believed that whichever side raised the resolution to the Mindszenty affair first would have to give ground.²²³ Therefore, while Budapest continued to regard the appointment of new bishops and the resolution to the Mindszenty question as the two most important goals,²²⁴ the Hungarian negotiating team was instructed not to take the initiative in the matter during the next round of negotiations. However, should the Vatican envoys raise it, then based on the conditions determined by the Politburo the government would consent to settling the matter at any time.²²⁵ When Casaroli, during the talks begun in Rome on October 1, 1963, attempted to portray the Mindszenty affair as if the Hungarian side alone had brought it up, the members of the Hungarian negotiating delegation

immediately hastened to correct this; specifically, they noted that both sides had jointly proposed putting the question on the agenda.²²⁶

As a consequence of the stalling tactics planned on both sides, during the second round of negotiations no substantive progress occurred on the matter. During the second council session, too, only other questions relating to the Hungarian Church were included on the agenda: neither did the Secretariat of State bring up the Mindszenty affair, nor did Pope Paul VI mention it during the audience he granted the Hungarian council fathers.²²⁷ The negotiating sides sooner or later recognized the major elements of each other's tactics. According to an information report dated December 9, 1963, in reference to the negotiations between the bishops and the Secretariat of State during the second session the Hungarian side claimed that behind the demands made by the Holy See in reality "lurked the Mindszenty question, the settlement of which is not spoken of. In their assessment, the resolution to the Mindszenty question is more important to the government, and at this price they can force us to fulfill their demands. The demands correspond to the demands suggested by the emigration."²²⁸ For his part, Casaroli in his account of March 1964 cautioned that the "lack of interest" displayed by the Hungarian government in the Mindszenty affair was in reality just a tactical move.²²⁹

The recognition of the negotiating partner's tactics almost certainly played an important role in the Hungarian side's suggestion in the course of the March 1964 talks that Mindszenty's case, because of its difficulty, should be separated from the other issues. As was shown above, although Casaroli feared the proposal to be merely yet another tactical ploy, in the end he still regarded it as acceptable. With this the course of the negotiations took a decisive turn. Whereas previously both sides wished to utilize the Mindszenty affair as a trump card in the sake of obtaining the most advantageous results possible, following the failure of the opposing intentions an agreement emerged that they would be ready to resolve the other problems included in the negotiations separately.²³⁰ Although for a time the Hungarian political leadership still hoped that in the impending agreement the Holy See would ultimately assent to the requested guarantees (for the sake of a rapid resolution they showed a willingness even to allow Mindszenty to retain his archiepiscopal title temporarily),²³¹ in the partial agreement signed on September 15, 1964 the question still remained among the matters left in abeyance.

During the remainder of the Second Vatican Council the resolution to the Mindszenty affair was permanently dropped from the agenda. In the interest of maintaining the negotiations the Holy See thought it better to dedicate the discussions to the more easily solvable problems, because under the given circumstances—in part because of Mindszenty's increasingly more intransigent position—the Secretariat of State appraised the solution to the cardinal's situation to be more difficult than previously.²³² Cardinal König's next visit did not mean a change in the assessment of the situation either but merely succeeded in eliciting the Hungarian government's displeasure: the Hungarian side deemed König's visit to Mindszenty an unfriendly, cold-war demonstration.²³³

The Hungarian government saw an opportunity at Vatican II not only to put out feelers about a resolution to the Mindszenty case but to settle other questions affecting the Hungarian Church as well.²³⁴ Nevertheless, it stipulated one basic condition for resolving the details: the Holy See should acknowledge—at least *de facto*—the status quo in Hungary. The leaders of church policy expected the Hungarian council fathers' every utterance, and indeed, their entire conduct, to serve this end. The proposal drafted in advance of the third session, for example, articulated this under the following main points:

1. Through its active involvement the delegation should dispel the legitimacy of those opinions claiming that it is timely even today to speak of the Hungarian R.C. Church as the Church of Silence.
2. Through its activity it should convince the Vatican and the public that the possible, practical and only feasible path is to settle the existing problems through bilateral negotiations with the people's democracies.
3. They must assume an active role in spurring on the Vatican to further negotiations and reaching compromises advantageous from the state's point of view as well.
4. In the interest of settling the matter of the excommunicated priests a positive influence must be exerted on the Vatican.
5. It must be understood that from the point of view of the future and life of the Church the peace priest movement—of which the Vatican has a distorted knowledge—does not represent nearly so great a danger as the conduct of those leading priests who by their behavior incite hostility to the state does.

6. The Vatican's competent authorities must be convinced that those living here at home, who feel a responsibility to the Church and therefore rely on the responsible leaders, are the ones who know the situation of the Hungarian Church.

In view of the faithfuls' attitude, cooperation with the state without yielding on principles is unimaginable, and the extent to which [one should yield] should be left to the bishops, who know how to engage in politics and know the situation well. The Vatican should acknowledge the legitimacy of this claim so that they may work undisturbed in the Church's interest.²³⁵

The state's selection, advance guidance, and continuous monitoring of those traveling abroad indeed represented a significant guarantee that the Hungarian chief pastors would be the spokesmen for good relations between Church and state in Rome as well, and that, along with acknowledging the difficulties, they would strive to emphasize the positives. As the documents attest, the prelates who were sent to Rome fulfilled the assignment they received from the state to a significant degree—though not unfailingly.

There were questions on which the Hungarian prelates appeared to identify almost completely with expectations. For example, during the first session even in private conversation Sándor Kovács emphasized the appropriateness of the legal regulation provided by the regime in Hungary:

We did this because the Vatican had no intention of bargaining with the Hungarian government, for which naturally there must have been reasons, but we, too, had our reasons for concluding an agreement. We bishops also live within the popular democratic order of the Hungarian People's Republic, and as a consequence of the change in political regime with Catholic and Hungarian responsibility we assumed the task of normalizing relations between the state and the Hungarian Catholic Church. [...] When we did this, we acted in the full entirety of our freedom of conscience, because we were well aware that by concluding the concordat we would incur the Holy See's ill-will and disapproval; but we concluded it in spite of this, since thereby we believed we were satisfying our Catholic and Hungarian obligations. [...] It is true that the Hungarian legislation cannot satisfy the universal Catholic Church, but the Catholic faith is no longer a state religion in our country, and therefore we must make do with the

possibilities provided by the law. Taking a stance against the laws, however, would not be to the benefit of the universal Catholic Church either, yet it would do much harm to the Hungarian Church, therefore the bishops strive to fulfill their mission by cultivating good relations with the state.²³⁶

Because the agreement of 1950 had come into existence between the episcopate and the state, thus it is no wonder that the Hungarian council fathers came to the defense of the agreement. After all, by trumpeting its benefits, or at least its necessity, they at once also explained their own loyal conduct.

The other most important law affecting the life of the Hungarian Church, Legal Edict No. 22 of 1957, which regulated the filling of church positions, however, was obviously a case of unilateral intervention by the state. Thus, the loyal Hungarian chief pastors also criticized this, and instead—as was seen above, likewise in accordance with the state's intentions—urged direct negotiations between the Holy See and the Hungarian government. In the course of his private conversation with Prelate Žabkar, for instance, Pál Brezanóczy called guaranteeing freedom to make appointments primary; for this reason, he recommended sending an apostolic visitor to Hungary and thereby indirectly establishing Vatican–Hungarian relations.²³⁷

It made no difference that it would have been desirable to the government in Budapest for the Holy See also to recognize *de jure* the status quo, that is, accept the laws violating the Church's freedom, since the Vatican was unwilling to do this. Nevertheless, with the negotiations commenced in the spring of 1963 the Holy See accepted *de facto* the prevailing situation and showed its willingness to seek a practical solution to the Church's most pressing problems. In terms of the country's perception abroad, in addition to settling the Mindszenty affair, for the Hungarian side it was likewise the filling of the episcopal sees that counted as primary. Thus it was this question that would become one of the central topics of the bilateral negotiations.

In this area, too, those responsible for Hungarian church policy attempted to sway the Holy See's decisions to accord with their own interests. An especially good opportunity for this presented itself because with regard to episcopal appointments the Vatican was reliant to a decisive degree on the Hungarian bishops' briefings when selecting candidates. Aside from the personnel recommendations of the Hungarian council fathers, the Holy See naturally attempted to look for alternative candidates as well, but it likewise

asked the opinion of the Hungarian episcopate about these.²³⁸ The fact that during the negotiations with the Hungarian government the Holy See had agreed not to insist on an on-site examination when conducting the canonical visitation represented an additional obstacle. Since the emigration increasingly came to feel that its knowledge about the native clergy was not sufficiently up-to-date,²³⁹ a significant amount of the necessary information about the candidates was likewise obtained from the Hungarian priests present at the Council.²⁴⁰

During the second session, for example, Casaroli asked Endre Hamvas for an opinion about persons whose names did not appear in the proposal of the bishop of Csanád but whom the Hungarian émigré priests recommended to the Holy See.²⁴¹ The fact that the Vatican was dependent on the Hungarian bishops was advantageous to the Hungarian government not only because the persons recommended by the Hungarian council fathers—first and foremost Hamvas—were acceptable to the state almost without exception. During the ongoing negotiations between the representatives of the government and the Holy See, the Hungarian side was at an advantage above all because the agents sent to the Council kept it precisely informed about the names being considered. For this reason, it could shape its negotiating strategy in such a way that during the final compromise the result most favorable from its own standpoint would be reached. It was for this reason that the following statement could be made prior to the impending signing of the partial agreement, at the August 11, 1964 meeting of the Politburo: “the persons suit us. Such a composition of the episcopate does not worsen the political situation but improves it.”²⁴²

Therefore, from the outset, the procedure for filling the episcopal sees set forth in the partial agreement of 1964 (by which the Holy See, despite all its reservations, in practice acknowledged the essence of Legal Edict No. 22 of 1957, or at least the state’s right to intervene, in principle), as well as the information concerning the process of nomination, created an advantageous situation for the Hungarian government to assert its interests. Following the recommendation of the Hungarian state security organs, however, the leaders of ecclesiastical policy did not content themselves even with this. They wished to ensure in the long run that sufficiently controllable bishops loyal to the state were appointed for Hungary. It was for this reason that, in addition to the intention to circumvent the emigration, during the nego-

tations the question of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute in Rome became more and more important.

The restoration of the institution, operating on the second floor of the *Palazzo Falconieri*, under Hungarian ecclesiastical management finally made it possible for the institute, which previously had been operating as the headquarters of the émigré priests, to serve as home beginning in February 1965, for priests from Hungary studying at pontifical universities in Rome. Operating under state supervision, the institution nevertheless apart from its primary role became an important and effective means of asserting the Hungarian government's ecclesiastical policy. While they played an important role during their stay in Rome in the area of foreign policy by influencing the Vatican's eastern policy and gathering intelligence about the Holy See's plans, later on it was mostly from among the agents dispatched among the institution's directors and students that middle- and upper-level leaders of the Hungarian Church would emerge. Within five to ten years the leaders of church policy were able to fill the teaching posts at theological colleges in Hungary, as well as the more important positions in the ecclesiastical administration, including the episcopal sees, with priests of tested loyalty. These priests, who were agents selected by the Interior Ministry III/III and III/I Divisions and planted in Rome under the pretext of pursuing their degrees, were, by virtue of their studies, acceptable to the Holy See as well.²⁴³

During the Council gaining acceptance for the peace priest movement and the absolution of excommunicated peace priests were those areas where the Hungarian government was able to achieve the least results. The State Office for Church Affairs saw the reasons for this relative failure in the fact that the Holy See proved especially adamant on this issue and at the same time the majority of Hungarian bishops, lacking a unified stance in the assessment of the peace priest movement, did not dare risk their good reputation in the Vatican either for their sake.²⁴⁴ The Holy See in reality saw clearly that the regime had established the peace movement as a means of serving its own interests to divide the Church internally, monitor it and guide it in accordance with state intentions. During the bilateral negotiations, therefore, it refrained from recognizing or encouraging the peace priest movement in any way.²⁴⁵ While protesting against making distinctions among priests based on political motivations, Casaroli called the movement unacceptable, citing first and foremost the harmful impact it exerted on church discipline.²⁴⁶ Among other

things, the rejection of a request for papal audience by the peace priests arriving in Rome during the Council on a pilgrimage, was a tangible sign of this dismissive attitude.²⁴⁷

Those in charge in Hungarian ecclesiastical policy must have had a particularly hard time accepting the Holy See's intransigent stance on this issue since in the newly emerging practice of church policy, which counted to a greater degree on the internal (self-)monitoring of the Church, it allotted an increasingly more important role to the peace priest movement.²⁴⁸ The working plan drafted for the second council session read as follows: "By conducting increased political education, the movement should help to inform and effectively influence clerical opinion about the second session of the Second Vatican Council. [...] Based on all this the role and significance of the peace priest movement will not diminish later on either. This is connected to the fact that, on the one hand, the peace priest movement's role in shaping public opinion possesses an ever greater significance within the Catholic Church. On the other hand, in the Church the guiding and orienting activity of the peace priest movement is demanded more and more, moreover the indirect methods increasingly prevalent in church policy also tend towards an increase in the movement's significance and at once its responsibility."²⁴⁹

An element of symbolic significance in gaining acceptance for the peace movement was the issue of absolving those peace priests who had been excommunicated in 1957.²⁵⁰ The leaders of Hungarian ecclesiastical policy sought to achieve a resolution to this by attempting to make the issue appear as a condition of reaching a consensus in matters important to the Holy See. However, after it became obvious that the problem was the Church's internal affair, Kádár recommended that the Hungarian side not raise this question officially because—being a question of internal church discipline—the government could not demand it, but rather Hamvas should "whisper" it to the negotiating Vatican representative.²⁵¹ At the bilateral negotiations, meanwhile, the government's official envoys supported the settlement entrusted to the council fathers from the background by presenting the Hungarian position and demands concerning the peace movement.

At first Hungarian church policy sought, through the bishops, to have the excommunications lifted as compensation for settling the Mindszenty affair and filling the episcopal sees.²⁵² After it became obvious that the Mindszenty

case would be resolved independently of the other issues, and that the appointment of the bishops was also in the interest of the Hungarian state, resolving the matter of the excommunicated priests was now spoken of only as a condition for maintaining “good relations,” and for granting Bishops Endrey and Bárd permission to function.²⁵³ In the end the Hungarian government experienced disappointment when the Holy See did not avail itself of the opportunity offered in exchange for absolving the “decretal priests” and in the partial agreement of 1964 did not succeed in settling the issue: “we expected the anathema to be lifted, why can’t they also take a step forward.”²⁵⁴ As a result, an even stronger pressure to urge a favorable settlement subsequently descended upon the bishops negotiating in Rome. While efforts were made through the council fathers to exert pressure on the Holy See by warning that a failure to resolve the matter of the “decretal priests” or the taking of more serious measures against the peace priest movement might even foil future negotiations²⁵⁵ the government’s official envoys themselves emphasized during the negotiations that the peace priests’ merits would continue to be acknowledged in the future, they would be defended against attacks, and such attacks would be evaluated as an attack against the state as well.²⁵⁶

For the Hungarian state, however, acceptance of the peace priest movement and defense of the (excommunicated) peace priests were at the same time also a question of prestige. This is indicated above all by the fact that in the case of the excommunicated priests the Holy See made the following offer, but in vain: should those concerned signal to the Holy See in writing that they regretted their disobedience, yet circumstances were such that for the time being they were unable to honor the Vatican’s wishes, the Holy Office would grant the interested parties absolution confidentially. The Hungarian government, however, did not regard such an internal settlement of the matter to be satisfactory but desired instead a public revocation of the decree.²⁵⁷ Subsequently the Hungarian bishops would see the main obstacle to resolving the issue likewise in the fact that the government in Budapest was pressing for a simple rehabilitation of the excommunicated; by this, however, they would have disavowed the Holy See.²⁵⁸

Thus, during Vatican II it was not only the Vatican’s intransigence or the bishops’ indifference that prevented a resolution to the matter of the peace priest movement, and specifically the excommunicated priests: the state’s

excessive demands also played a significant role in this. The negotiations relating to the peace movement nevertheless by no means ended in failure for the regime in Budapest. In the final analysis the atmosphere of dialogue present at the Council and the partial agreement of 1964 created a favorable situation for the peace movement. The *modus non moriendi* between state and Church was appraised in the State Office for Church Affairs as a beneficial example for the Catholics abroad as well, while at home the peace priests interpreted it as vindication of their own conduct. As a consequence of all these factors the peace movement was able to continue its work “in a much more favorable climate [...] than at any time.”²⁵⁹

Notes

- ¹ Operational plan to prevent the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 240-45; Operational plan for the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 6, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 245-49; Operational plan for the Second Vatican Council. September 7, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 254-56.
- ² E.g. Work plan for the year 1964 on coordinated actions against the Vatican. Budapest, March 21, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/6. "Canale," 192-98; Proposal on the preparation of agents for the third session. Budapest, August 25, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. "Canale," 335-39; Proposal on the preparation of the participation at Session Three of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 12, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. 316-23. Published in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 150-57.
- ³ Work plan for the year 1964 on coordinated actions against the Vatican. Budapest, March 21, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/6. "Canale," 192-98.
- ⁴ Proposal on the preparation of the participation at Session Three of the Second Vatican Council and on operational actions regarding the Pontifical Hungarian Institute. Budapest, August 19, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. "Canale," 324-34. Published in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 158-68.
- ⁵ Proposal for the Politburo on the Hungarian participation in the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 28, 1962. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 277. ő. e. 63-66, and Minutes of the Politburo's session of September 4, 1962. Ibid., 5-6.
- ⁶ The HSWP CC Politburo's resolution of August 27, 1963. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 311. ő. e. 3.
- ⁷ Resolutions of the HSWP Politburo on the negotiations with the Vatican. August 11, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 198-99; Proposal of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda for the Politburo on some issues to be settled with the Vatican. August 5, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 190-92; and Minutes of the Politburo's session of August 4, 1965. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 371. ő. e. 8-9.

- ⁸ The HSWP CC Politburo's resolution of August 27, 1963. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 311. ő. e. 3.
- ⁹ Operational proposal for the meeting in Warsaw on July 5–7, 1962. Budapest, June 28, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/1. "Canale," 450–53.
- ¹⁰ Operational plan to prevent the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 242.
- ¹¹ Operational plan for the Second Vatican Council. September 7, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 254.
- ¹² Report on the delegation to the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, September 19, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 270–271. For the actual list of travelers, see Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 349–50.
- ¹³ Cf. Máté-Tóth, "II. Vatikáni Zsinat," 21.
- ¹⁴ Copy of the December 27, 1962 report of the Hungarian embassy in Moscow. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-3/a/1963.
- ¹⁵ Over the course of November 1962 the ÁEH headquarters had asked the rapporteurs for Church affairs for their opinions on the anticipated tasks connected to the Council. Cf. on this the reports of the county rapporteurs for Church affairs: MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-35/a-c/1962.
- ¹⁶ Report of the ÁEH for the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on the first session of the Second Vatican Council. December 20, 1962, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 70–73; and Information on the main experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, December 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-32/1962.
- ¹⁷ Copy of the Hungarian minister's to Rome February 4, 1963 letter to Foreign Minister János Péter. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-3/d/1963.
- ¹⁸ Proposal on the Council and the Vatican–Hungarian relations. Budapest, March 5, 1963. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1963/7. ő. e. 80–84.
- ¹⁹ The proposal states that "Pope John XXIII through Casaroli expressed his wish—and the current pope has also—for more Hungarian ecclesiastics to be allowed to participate in the Council's second session than had in the previous one." Proposal for the Politburo on the negotiations with the Vatican and on the members of the council delegation. Budapest, August 23, 1963. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1963/1. ő. e. 185.
- ²⁰ The HSWP CC Politburo's resolution of August 27, 1963. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 311. ő. e. 3.
- ²¹ Cf. above, Part I., chapter 3, endnote 64.
- ²² Archbishop Pericle Felici to Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád. Vatican, September 11, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-9/1963.

- ²³ The names of the traveling prelates and their attendants were conveyed to Casaroli by Endre Hamvas on September 5. Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád to Agostino Casaroli. Szeged, September 5, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-9/1963.
- ²⁴ Tasks related to the Second Vatican Council. Undated. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 347-48.
- ²⁵ Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád to Agostino Casaroli. Szeged, September 5, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-9/1963.
- ²⁶ Report of the IM's Subsection III/III-2-a on the West-European journey of Catholic agents. September 17, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 143-44; and Máté-Tóth, "II. Vatikáni Zsinat," 22-23.
- ²⁷ Report of the IM's Subsection III/III-2-a on the West-European journey of Catholic agents. September 17, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 143-44.
- ²⁸ Resolutions of the HSWP Politburo on the negotiations with the Vatican. August 11, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 198-99; Proposal of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda for the Politburo on some issues to be settled with the Vatican. August 5, 1964, in *Ibid.*, 190-92.
- ²⁹ The appointments were published in: "Consistorium secretum" (September 26, 1964), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 56 (1964): 863, 873.
- ³⁰ For the list of names, see Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 373; and Máté-Tóth, "II. Vatikáni Zsinat," 32-35.
- ³¹ Memorandum for the Politburo. Budapest, September 16, 1964. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 344. ő. e. 51-53.
- ³² This was also emphasized already by agents reporting after the second session. E.g., Report of agent "Pátkai." December 16, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. "Canale," 296a; Report of agent "Dr. Szabó" on the Council. December 22, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. "Canale," 316-17.
- ³³ Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád to the ÁEH. Szeged, August 4, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-2/a/1964.
- ³⁴ Information report on the experiences with the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, February 12, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 215-17.
- ³⁵ Proposal on the Second Vatican Council and the Pontifical Hungarian Institute. Budapest, July 23, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. "Canale," 302-303; Proposal on the preparation of the participation at Session Three of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 12, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. "Canale," 316-23. The two documents are published in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 148-57.
- ³⁶ Proposal to prepare agents for Session Three of the Council. Budapest, August 25, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. "Canale," 335-39.

- ³⁷ Proposal to prepare agents for Session Three of the Council and for other operational measures. Budapest, September 10, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. "Canale," 340-342. Published in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 169-71.
- ³⁸ Proposal to prepare agents for Session Three of the Council and for other operational measures. Budapest, 1964. September 10. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. "Canale," 340-42. Published in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 169-71; Semestral report. Budapest, June 1, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/9. "Canale," 180-83; Máté-Tóth, "II. Vatikáni Zsinat," 32-35.
- ³⁹ Archbishop Pericle Felici to Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád. Vatican City, July 16, 1965. ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 342, fasc. 4. Cf. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/j/1965. The precedence of this letter: Amleto Cicognani to Pericle Felici, Vatican City, July 14, 1965. ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 333, 10.
- ⁴⁰ Archbishop Endre Hamvas of Kalocsa to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Kalocsa, August 7, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/i/1965.
- ⁴¹ Minutes of the Politburo's session of August 4, 1965. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 371. ő. e. 8-9. For the two recommendations, differing only in their wording, see: Proposal for the Politburo on the participation of Hungarian prelates at the Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1965. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1965/12. ő. e. 105-106; and Proposal for the Politburo. Budapest, July 28, 1965. *Ibid.*, 107.
- ⁴² ÁEH Deputy Chairman Imre Miklós to Archbishop Endre Hamvas of Kalocsa. Budapest, August 18, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/i/1965; Archbishop Endre Hamvas of Kalocsa to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Kalocsa, August 23, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-6/1965; Archiepiscopal Vicar László Pintér to ÁEH Head of Department László Nagy. Kalocsa, October 11, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-6/a/1965.
- ⁴³ Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation at Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, November 11, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 133.
- ⁴⁴ Auxiliary Bishop Imre Szabó of Esztergom to ÁEH Deputy Chairman Imre Miklós. Esztergom, August 26, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/m/1965.
- ⁴⁵ Cf. the incomplete summary material relating to the third session. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. "Canale," 311-313; Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 179-81.
- ⁴⁶ Archbishop Endre Hamvas of Kalocsa to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Kalocsa, August 23, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-6/1965; Archiepiscopal Vicar László Pintér to ÁEH Head of Department László Nagy. Kalocsa, October 11, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-6/a/1965.
- ⁴⁷ Memorandum for the meeting with the Hungarian council fathers. September 17, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d 0022-20/1962; Memorandum of ÁEH Chairman

József Prantner for Deputy Prime Minister Gyula Kállai. Budapest, September 18, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. M-5/19/1963; Minutes of the Politburo's session of September 22, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 219; Minutes of the Politburo's session of August 31, 1965. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 373. ő. e.

- ⁴⁸ Proposal for the Politburo on the Hungarian participation in the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 21, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-14/1962; Draft work plan on the tasks related to the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 14, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-15/1962; Work plan on the tasks related to the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, September 11, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-15/a/1962.
- ⁴⁹ Fejérdy, "Presenza ungherese," 168-69.
- ⁵⁰ Cf. Report on the information provided by the operative regulation III/e no. 299/1. Budapest, February 4, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/6. "Canale," 101.
- ⁵¹ Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Szombathely, September 7, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-7/c/1963.
- ⁵² Operative plan regarding the Second Vatican Council. September 7, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 254-56; Report of the IM's Subsection III/III-2-a on the west-european journey of Catholic agents. September 17, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 143-144; Proposal on the preparation of agents for the third session. Budapest, August 25, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. "Canale," 335-39; Proposal to prepare agents for Session Three of the Council and for other operational measures. Budapest, September 10, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a, 340-42, published in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 169-171; Work plan for the operational tasks of the IM's III/I and III/III Divisions against the Vatican and its institutes. Budapest, October 29, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/9-a. 349-50.
- ⁵³ Cf. Copy of the letter of Hungarian minister to Rome Száll to Foreign Minister Péter. Rome, October 30, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-47/1963; Summary report of György Földes on his work in the year 1963/64. Budapest, August 14, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Vatikán 1945-1964. I-18-236/1964; Report on the conversations with the members of the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, October 20, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/8-a. "Canale," 254-55.
- ⁵⁴ Cf. Report of Hungarian minister to Rome Száll to Foreign Minister Péter on the meeting with the Hungarian council delegation. November 17, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Vatikán IV-14/1960-63. The contents of the source are summarized in Balogh, *Mindszenty József*, 1148.
- ⁵⁵ Cf. "Appunto di Mons. Samorè su un colloquio con Mons. Hamvas. 13 novembre 1962," in Barberini, *La politica*, 23-24. The title of Bishop Hamvas's submission—misspelled—is known from a recommendation drafted by the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda for the Politburo on March 22, 1963. See

Ólmosi, *Mindszenty*, 100–102; republished in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 78–81.

- ⁵⁶ Report of György Vitányi for the ÁEH on the Council. December 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. “Canale,” 333.
- ⁵⁷ Copy of the letter of Hungarian minister to Rome Száll to Foreign Minister Péter. Rome, October 30, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 004–47/1963; Report of the agent “Péter Győri,” January 26, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 59–60; Report of the agent “Kövér” on the Council. January 10, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 51–54.
- ⁵⁸ Operative plan regarding the Second Vatican Council. September 7, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 254; Report on the operational work in Rome. Budapest, December 10, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 333–36; Proposal to interrogate the agents participated at Session Two of the Council. Budapest, December 10, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. “Canale,” 286–87; Report on the mission of Police Major Oszkár Kiss in Rome. Budapest, December 11, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. “Canale,” 288–92; Information report on the experiences with the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, February 12, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 214–17; Proposal on the preparation of agents for the third session. Budapest, August 25, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7–a. “Canale,” 335–39; The incomplete summary material relating to the third session. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7–a. “Canale,” 305–13, in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 173–83; Proposal on the preparation of agents for the fourth session. Budapest, August 6, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 114–19; Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation at Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, November 11, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 136.
- ⁵⁹ Operational proposal for the meeting in Warsaw on July 5–7, 1962. Budapest, June 28, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/1. “Canale,” 450–53.
- ⁶⁰ Summary report on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 29, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 132–36.
- ⁶¹ Draft on the policy to adopt regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0022–8/1962. 6.
- ⁶² Work plan for the tasks related to the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, September 11, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0022–15/a/1962.
- ⁶³ The article did in fact appear in the journal’s October issue: Kovács, “Az egyetemes zsinat elé,” 577–80. Cf. Rétfalvi, “Kovács Sándor szombathelyi püspök,” 39–40.
- ⁶⁴ Draft work plan on the tasks related to the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 14, 1962. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0022–15/1962. 1.
- ⁶⁵ Hal’ko, “Comunisti slovacchi,” 176–77.

- ⁶⁶ Information on the Second Vatican Council to be opened on October 11, 1962. Budapest, September 21, 1962. BFL XXIII/102c. 112. d. 0018-13/1962. 4.
- ⁶⁷ Morale report dealing with the Second Vatican Council. Szombathely, November 15, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 318-20.
- ⁶⁸ Report of agent "Németh László" on the morale regarding the Council. Eger, November 6, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.2. M-33 265. "Németh László," 113.
- ⁶⁹ Draft proposal on the tasks related to the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 3, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-15/1962.
- ⁷⁰ Draft on the policy to adopt regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-8/1962, 6-7.
- ⁷¹ Draft work plan on the tasks related to the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 14, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-15/1962, 3; and Work plan for the tasks related to the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, September 11, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-15/a/1962, 3. According to our sources it was the practice in connection with the Council later on as well that one more ecclesiastical and one political topic had to be debated at the crown assemblies. Cf. the reports of agent "Salamon" on the crown assemblies of the district of Nagykapornak. ÁBTL 3.1.2. M-30 679/1, "Salamon."
- ⁷² Information on the Second Vatican Council to be opened on October 11, 1962. Budapest, September 21, 1962. BFL XXIII. 102.c. 112. d. 0018-13/1962.
- ⁷³ Report of agent "Salamon" on the October 12, 1965 crown assembly of the Nagykapornak district. October 20, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.2. M-30 679/1, "Salamon," 166.
- ⁷⁴ Draft circular letter of Apostolic Administrator Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer of Esztergom. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. E-15-14/1964.
- ⁷⁵ Information on the main experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, December 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-32/1962, 2.
- ⁷⁶ Ibid.
- ⁷⁷ Report of agent "Tanár." September 3, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-13 581/4, "Áruló," 59-60.
- ⁷⁸ Report of agent "Tanár." April 29, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-13 581/4. "Áruló," 139-40.
- ⁷⁹ Cf. Mózessy, "1956-ot követő megtorlás," 132-38.
- ⁸⁰ Work plan. Budapest, October 1, 1962. BFL XXIII. 102.c. 112. d. 0018-14/1962. A letter of this type sent by the crown assembly of Kiskunfélegyháza see: Alcuni sacerdoti ungheresi a Hamvas. Kiskunfélegyháza, October 25, 1963. ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 610, fasc. 1.
- ⁸¹ Information on the Second Vatican Council to be opened on October 11, 1962. Budapest, September 21, 1962. BFL XXIII. 102.c. 112. d. 0018-13/1962.
- ⁸² Draft on the policy to adopt regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-8/1962.

- ⁸³ Information on the Second Vatican Council to be opened on October 11, 1962. Budapest, September 21, 1962. BFL XXIII. 102.c. 112. d. 0018–13/1962, 1–2.
- ⁸⁴ Operational plan to prevent the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 240; The Vatican policy and the preparation of the Ecumenical Council. Undated. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 413.
- ⁸⁵ Bánkúti, “Jezsuiták,” 164–79.
- ⁸⁶ Speech of Kádár. Minutes on the Politburo’s session of July 20, 1965. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 5. cs. 370. ő. e. 28.
- ⁸⁷ E.g., on Sándor Kovács’s case, see Soós, “Kovács Sándor,” 945–53. Returning from the Council, Vince Kovács’s conversations were also controlled. Cf. Summary report on the object codnamed “Liliom.” Budapest, January 21, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 142–45.
- ⁸⁸ At the talks in Rome on July 14–21, 1965, for instance, the Hungarian government complained about the behavior of Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár, Apostolic Administrator Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer of Esztergom, Archabbot Norbert Legányi of Pannonhalma and auxiliary Bishop Mihály Endrey of Eger. Report of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda for the Politburo on the negotiations between the Hungarian government and the Vatican. July 9, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 273.
- ⁸⁹ Draft proposal to coordinate the tasks of the church policy regarding the Catholic Church. Budapest, January 11, 1961. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 002–14/a/1960, 4–5.
- ⁹⁰ Cf. Memorandum of Deputy Interior’s Minister József Galambos and ÁEH Chairman József Prantner on their meeting regarding the priests freed by amnesty on April 19, 1963. Budapest, May 15, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0037–10/1963.
- ⁹¹ Report on the negotiations between the Hungarian government and the Vatican. Budapest, October 10, 1963. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1963/7. ő. e. 218; Card. Secretary of State Amleto Cicognani to Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. Sz–18–3/1964.
- ⁹² Memorandum on the April 4 festivity at the Theological Academy. Budapest, April 17, 1964. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. K–23–1/1964, 3.
- ⁹³ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulla ripresa dei contatti con il Governo ungherese [Budapest, 14–24 marzo 1964 (con n. 7 allegati)] 10 aprile 1964,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 111.
- ⁹⁴ Speeches of Mihály Korom and Zoltán Komócsin. Minutes of the Politburo’s session of August 11, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 195–96.
- ⁹⁵ Report of agent “Tanár.” February 9, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–13 581/4. “Áruló,” 133–34.
- ⁹⁶ E.g., Summary report of György Földes on his work in the year 1963/64. Budapest, August 14, 1964. MNL-OL XIX–J–1–j. Vatikán 1945–1964. I–18–236/1964.

- ⁹⁷ The travelers as a rule gave their accounts orally at the ÁEH, but there are written accounts as well. E.g., Memorandum of Pál Brezanóczy for the ÁEH on the Second Vatican Council. Eger, January 14, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-28/1962.
- ⁹⁸ The most important document collections are the dossier series “Canale” (ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/1-10) and “Hontalanok” (ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs-2/1-7).
- ⁹⁹ Cf. Proposal to interrogate the agents participated at the Council. Budapest, December 17, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 342-46.
- ¹⁰⁰ Work plan for the year 1964 on coordinated actions against the Vatican. Budapest, March 21, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/6. “Canale,” 192.
- ¹⁰¹ Operational proposal for the meeting in Warsaw on July 5-7, 1962. Budapest, June 28, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/1. “Canale,” 450-53; Report on the Warsaw meeting of the socialist countries’ state security services. Budapest, July 11, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 230-37.
- ¹⁰² Memorandum on the Budapest meeting of the socialist state security services. Budapest, July 29, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. “Canale,” 181-185.
- ¹⁰³ Report on talks in Warsaw about church affairs. Budapest, September 29, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/9-a. “Canale,” 385.
- ¹⁰⁴ Cf. Operational plan to prevent the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 240-45; Operational plans and measures. (Summer 1963), ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 350-55; Proposal to interrogate the agents who participated at Session Two of the Council. Budapest, December 10, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. “Canale,” 286-87; Proposal on the preparation of agents for the fourth session. Budapest, August 6, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. “Canale,” 114-19.
- ¹⁰⁵ Operational proposal for the meeting in Warsaw on July 5-7, 1962. Budapest, June 28, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/1. “Canale,” 450; Operational plan to prevent the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 240-44; Draft on the policy to adopt regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, July 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-8/1962. 6; Work plan on the tasks related to the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, September 11, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-15/a/1962.
- ¹⁰⁶ On the development of council secrecy, see O’Malley, *What Happened*, 173., 205-206; *History of Vatican II*, Vol I, 177-78; 462-79; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. II, 221-32; 546-48; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. IV, 14-15.
- ¹⁰⁷ Report of agent “Pál Kékes” on the meetings in Rome of Endre Hamvas and Pál Brezanóczy (June 27-July 4, 1963), in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 126.
- ¹⁰⁸ Cf. 1.20. Conciliar documents; 1.21. On the Council. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. boxes 27-29.

- ¹⁰⁹ “The information obtained has illuminated the ambitions, battles, and major contradictions of the Vatican’s two basic tendencies, and the interweaving of the conservative forces with the Hungarian clerical emigration, as well as their ambitions and plans for our country and the other socialist countries.” Summary report of György Földes on his work in the year 1963/64. Budapest, August 14, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Vatikán 1945–1964. I-18–236/1964.
- ¹¹⁰ Copy of the Hungarian minister’s to Rome February 4, 1963 letter to Foreign Minister János Péter. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-3/d/1963.
- ¹¹¹ Resolution to open the Group file codenamed “Hontalanok.” Budapest, November 15, 1962. ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs-2/2. “Hontalanok,” 256–58.
- ¹¹² Fejérdy, “Hontalanok,” 69–70.
- ¹¹³ Proposal on the preparation of agents for the fourth session. Budapest, August 6, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. “Canale,” 114–19; Work plan for the operational tasks of the IM’s III/I and III/III Divisions against the Vatican and its institutes. Budapest, October 29, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/9-a. “Canale,” 347–50; Extract from the report of agent “Kékes” provided on September 28. Budapest, October 9, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. “Canale,” 122–26.
- ¹¹⁴ “The government set up the following goals and tasks in connection with the delegation: to document the good relations between state and Church, as well as religious freedom, through their travel abroad.” Report on the experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 6, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 138–50, in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 50.
- ¹¹⁵ “Minuta di Pienza per la Congregazione per gli Affari Ecclesiastici Straordinari. 27 novembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 34–35; Proposal regarding the leaders of the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, November 1, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 306–308.
- ¹¹⁶ Cf. Information bulletin no. 3 of the ÁEH on the first session of the Second Vatican Council and on its national and international press coverage between December 1962 and January 1963. Budapest, January 4, 1963. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1963/7. ő. e. 61.
- ¹¹⁷ Memorandum on the evolution of the international relations of the churches. Budapest, September 9, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 005-21/1963.
- ¹¹⁸ Proposal on international contacts of the Catholic Church in the year 1963. Budapest, April 19, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 005-10/1963.
- ¹¹⁹ Information letter of ÁEH Chairman József Prantner to the church leaders and the county rapporteurs for church affairs. December 7, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. E-42-1/1964.
- ¹²⁰ E.g., Proposal on the preparation of the participation at Session Three of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 12, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a.

- “Canale,” 318, in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 152; Proposal on the preparation of agents for the fourth session. Budapest, August 6, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. “Canale,” 114–19.
- ¹²¹ IM report. Budapest, November 12, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0037-23/1963; Information report on the experiences with the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, February 12, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. “Canale,” 215.
- ¹²² IM report. Budapest, November 12, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0037-23/1963.
- ¹²³ Report of agent “Pátkai” on the Council. December 16, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. “Canale,” 294.
- ¹²⁴ Report of agent “Dr. Szabó” on the Council. December 22, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. “Canale,” 316; Report of agent “Kecskeméti” on the contacts of the Hungarian council delegation to the council fathers from socialist countries. March 2, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/6. “Canale,” 169.
- ¹²⁵ Summary report on the main characteristics of the present Vatican policy. Budapest, May 27, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. “Canale,” 251.
- ¹²⁶ Report of agent “Dorogi” on his journey to Rome. December 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/8. “Canale,” 99; Report of agent “Kecskeméti” on the contacts of the Hungarian council delegation to the council fathers from socialist countries. March 2, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/6. “Canale,” 169.
- ¹²⁷ On the Hungarian council delegation. January 5, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. “Canale,” 8.
- ¹²⁸ Report of agent “Pátkai” on the Council. December 16, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. 294.
- ¹²⁹ Report of agent “Kecskeméti” on the contacts of the Hungarian council delegation to the council fathers from socialist countries. March 2, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/6. “Canale,” 169; Report of agent “László.” Veszprém, January 22, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. “Canale,” 100.
- ¹³⁰ Report of agent “László.” Veszprém, January 22, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. “Canale,” 99. On the luncheon invitation, see also: Interrogation of agent “Kecskeméti.” Szeged, January 25, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. “Canale,” 60v.
- ¹³¹ Cf. Summary report of György Földes on his work in the year 1963/64. Budapest, August 14, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Vatikán 1945–1964. I-18-236/1964.
- ¹³² Letter of Head of Department Pál Rác to the Rome embassy on the request of the ÁEH. Budapest, June 11, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Olaszország 1945–1964. 5/b-005204/1962.
- ¹³³ Answer of Gyula Simó, ambassador to Rome to the request of the ÁEH. September 13, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Olaszország 1945–1964. 5/b-005204/3/1962.

- ¹³⁴ Information report on the contacts between the French and Hungarian bishops. Budapest, October 20, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/8-a. 257-58; Report of agent "György" on the Council. January 19, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 14-17; Report of György Vitányi for the ÁEH on the Council. December 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. "Canale," 333, 335-36.
- ¹³⁵ Report of ÁEH Chairman József Prantner for the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. December 30, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 290; On the Hungarian council delegation. January 5, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 8; Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, January 17, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 11-12; Political survey on the Council's fourth session. Rome, March 4, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Vatikán 1966. IV-20-001999/1966.
- ¹³⁶ IM report. Budapest, November 12, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0037-23/1963; On the Hungarian council delegation. January 5, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 8. "Spiritual influencing" meant among other things the sending of theological-themed periodicals and books. Cf. Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, January 17, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 12.
- ¹³⁷ Information on the main experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, December 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-32/1962.
- ¹³⁸ Copy of the Hungarian minister's to Rome February 4, 1963 letter to Foreign Minister János Péter. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-3/d/1963.
- ¹³⁹ IM report. Budapest, November 12, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0037-23/1963.
- ¹⁴⁰ Report of agent "László." Veszprém, January 22, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 100; Interrogation of agent "Kecskeméti." Szeged, January 25, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 59-60v.
- ¹⁴¹ The ÁEH's proposals on issues to be settled with the Vatican. March 22, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 80.
- ¹⁴² Report on the trip of Hungarian clerics to France. Budapest, July 26, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/3. "Canale," 31.
- ¹⁴³ "The pilgrim group and peace priest group made a substantial propaganda impact by its appearance and statements to the press, which contributed immeasurably to influencing Western public opinion in favor of the Hungarian People's Republic." Summary report on the second session of the Vatican Council. Budapest, February 3, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7, "Canale," 210.
- ¹⁴⁴ Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 137-38.

- ¹⁴⁵ Németh: "Idegenforgalom és emigráció," 42–65; and Resolution of the HSWP CC Politburo on the emigration. June 6, 1961. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 5. cs. 232. ő. e. 46–49.
- ¹⁴⁶ Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. "Canale," 138.
- ¹⁴⁷ Summary report of György Földes on his work in the year 1963/64. Budapest, August 14, 1964. MNL-OL XIX–J–1–j. Vatikán 1945–1964. I–18–236/1964.
- ¹⁴⁸ Cf. Report on the experiences in Vienna, Paris, Lourdes and Rome of the pilgrim group. Budapest, November 30, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 005–28/1963.
- ¹⁴⁹ Proposal on international contacts of the Catholic Church in the year 1963. Budapest, April 19, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 005–10/1963.
- ¹⁵⁰ Information report on the luncheon in honor of the Hungarian bishops. Budapest, December 7, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. "Canale," 331–32.
- ¹⁵¹ Copy of the letter of Hungarian minister to Rome Száll to Foreign Minister Péter. Rome, October 30, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 004–47/1963; Information report of the reception of the bishops at the Hungarian embassy in Rome. Budapest, November 28, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/4. "Canale," 266.
- ¹⁵² Report of Rome Ambassador József Száll to Foreign Minister János Péter on the luncheon given in honor of the Hungarian bishops. Rome, December 5, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 004–61/1963.
- ¹⁵³ Luncheon given in honor of the Hungarian bishops attending the Council. November 19, 1964. MNL-OL XIX–J–1–j. Vatikán 1945–1964. IV–14/1964–65; Report of ÁEH Chairman József Prantner for the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. December 30, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 290–91; On the Hungarian council delegation. January 5, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. "Canale," 7; Report on the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, December 29, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. "Canale," 150.
- ¹⁵⁴ Information report of the reception of the bishops at the Hungarian embassy in Rome. Budapest, November 28, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/4, "Canale," 266.
- ¹⁵⁵ Report of agent "Péter Győri." January 26, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. "Canale," 60.
- ¹⁵⁶ Report of Rome Ambassador József Száll to Foreign Minister János Péter on the luncheon given in honor of the Hungarian bishops. Rome, December 5, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 004–61/1963. According to "Péter Győri's" information, the reference to "reports circulating in the press" in reality concealed the statement given by Menyhért Rozsáli, episcopal vicar of Győr, to *L'Unità*. In it, Rozsáli specifically call for *Realpolitik* on the part of the Vatican. Casaroli found this insulting, however, and cancelled his plan to attend because he did not want by

appearing to acknowledge Rozsáli's wish. Report of agent "Péter Győri." January 26, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. "Canale," 60.

- ¹⁵⁷ The ÁEH bulletin, for example, emphasized that the signing of the partial agreement "at once also means recognition of the Hungarian People's Republic." Information bulletin no. 9 of the ÁEH on the national and international press coverage on church policy. Budapest, December 30, 1964. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1964/15. ő. e. 168. Deputy Foreign Minister Béla Szilágyi went so far as to state that the Vatican "in essence recognized that the socialist state has the right to intervene in the Church's affairs." Report of Szilágyi on the negotiations. Vatican, September 18, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Vatikán 1945-1964. IV-14/1964-65.
- ¹⁵⁸ Luncheon given in honor of the Hungarian bishops attending the Council. November 19, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Vatikán 1945-1964. IV-14/1964-65.
- ¹⁵⁹ This was articulated most forcefully by the leaders of Czechoslovak church policy. Fejérdy, "Szocialista tömb," 215.
- ¹⁶⁰ Report on the conference of the heads of the socialist countries' church offices. Budapest, June 6, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 0015-1/a/1964. 4.
- ¹⁶¹ Summary report on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 29, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 132-36.
- ¹⁶² Report on the experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 6, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 140.
- ¹⁶³ Report on the Warsaw meeting of the socialist countries' state security services. Budapest, July 11, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2, "Canale," 230-37.
- ¹⁶⁴ Proposal for further measures regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, October 4, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 277-79; Proposal for further measures regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, October 16, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2, "Canale," 301-303.
- ¹⁶⁵ Report on the Warsaw meeting of the socialist countries' state security services. Budapest, July 11, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2, "Canale," 230-37.
- ¹⁶⁶ Summary report on the main characteristics of the present Vatican policy. Budapest, May 27, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. "Canale," 274-75, in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 129-30.
- ¹⁶⁷ Numerous memoranda about the exhibition can be found among the files of the state security organs. The most detailed account is the information material on the exhibiton provided by the Polish secret services. March 20, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/3-a. "Canale," 266-92.
- ¹⁶⁸ Published in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 226-30. On the versions of the statements, see Fejérdy, "Hontalanok," 80, note 70.

- ¹⁶⁹ Cf. Compilation of the international Catholic press articles concerning Hungary. November 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/4, "Canale," 245-52; Information report on the Hungarian Catholic emigration in Rome. Budapest, April 26, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/3-a. "Canale," 358-62; Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation at Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, November 11, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 133-36.
- ¹⁷⁰ Report on the experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 6, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 139-42; On the Hungarian council delegation. January 5, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 5.
- ¹⁷¹ Fejérdy, "Hontalanok," 78-79.
- ¹⁷² Ibid., 75.
- ¹⁷³ Ibid., 75-76.
- ¹⁷⁴ Memorandum of Miklós Beresztóczy. Budapest, November 30, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-12/j/1962.
- ¹⁷⁵ Report on the experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 6, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 140.
- ¹⁷⁶ Fejérdy, "Hontalanok," 71-73.
- ¹⁷⁷ Operational plans and measures. (After the death of John XXIII). ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 352. Cf. also Fejérdy, "Hontalanok," 73-74.
- ¹⁷⁸ Proposal for further measures regarding the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, October 4, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 277-79.
- ¹⁷⁹ Proposal of the IM's divisions III/I and III/III to intensify disinformation during Session Two of the Council. September 6, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 136-40. The document is briefly evaluated by Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 50-51. The disinformation plan remained in effect in the later phase of the Council also. Cf. Proposal on the preparation of the participation at Session Three of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 12, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. "Canale," 316-23, in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 150-57.
- ¹⁸⁰ Letter of agent "Kövé" to the Council's secretary. October 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. "Canale," 221-25.
- ¹⁸¹ "Appunto di Mons. Casaroli per l'Ambasciatore di Ungheria a Roma. Mai 1965," in Barberini, *La politica*, 172-73.
- ¹⁸² Proposal of the IM's divisions III/I and III/III to intensify disinformation during Session Two of the Council. September 6, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 136-40.
- ¹⁸³ Report on the second day of negotiations with Agostino Casaroli. May 8, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 105. Regarding the 53 allegedly arrested

- priests, see also: Memorandum of Pál Brezanóczy for the ÁEH on the Second Vatican Council. Eger, January 14, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-28/1962; “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli sugli incontri con i rappresentanti del Governo ungherese. Vaticano, 18 maggio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 65.
- ¹⁸⁴ Information report on the experiences with the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, February 12, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7, “Canale,” 217.
- ¹⁸⁵ Report on the second day of negotiations with Agostino Casaroli. May 8, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 105. Cf. also Fejérdy, “Hontalanok,” 80.
- ¹⁸⁶ Memorandum of Pál Brezanóczy for the ÁEH on the Second Vatican Council. January 14, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-28/1962. The memorandum does not specify on whose part this wish was raised. However, from the context it appears that this issue was raised at the Secretariat of State. This is indicated furthermore by the fact that in the course of the Vatican–Hungarian negotiations the head of the Sacred Congregation for Seminaries, Msgr Francesco Marchisano, encouraged Casaroli to have the Pontifical Hungarian Institute’s original function restored. Cf. Németh, “Mindszenty József,” 80.
- ¹⁸⁷ Cf. Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, documents 23, 25, 26 and 27.
- ¹⁸⁸ Information report on the experiences with the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, February 12, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7, “Canale,” 217. This is supported also by the Hungarian summary report prepared on the negotiations; see Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 158. The memorandum signed significantly later, on March 22, 1964, also reveals that during the October discussion Prantner and his people wished first of all to eliminate István Mester’s position as representative, and only in this context was the “intolerable” behavior of the émigré priests living in the Pontifical Hungarian Institute mentioned. “Promemoria sulle trattative fra Santa Sede e rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (Roma, 1–5 ottobre 1963),” in Barberini, *La politica*, 98–99.
- ¹⁸⁹ Information report on the experiences with the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, February 12, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7, “Canale,” 217.
- ¹⁹⁰ Report of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda and the ÁEH for the Politburo on the negotiations between the Hungarian government and the Vatican. March 24, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 181. On the above, see also: Fejérdy, “Hontalanok,” 83–85.
- ¹⁹¹ József Száll, Hungarian ambassador in Rome to József Prantner József, chairman of the ÁEH. June 26, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 187.
- ¹⁹² Handover’s protocol of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute. November 5, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. R-41-1/1964. About the handover Ignác Csepregi in a letter to Prantner on November 19 raises, among other things, the institute’s

financial issues with respect to the future. Cf. Ignác Csepregi to József Prantner. Rome, November 19, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. R-41-1/1964. The documents are published in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 236–39. The cooperation of the Secretariat of State and the leaders of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute regarding the handover of the Institute is thoroughly documented in Németh, “Mindszenty József,” 80–90.

¹⁹³ Cf. Report on the results of the action against the leaders of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute, József Zágon and István Mester. Budapest, October 13, 1964. ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs-2/5. “Hontalanok,” 199.

¹⁹⁴ Such, for instance, was the abovementioned statement prepared to compromise József Zágon, which was intended to prevent the building of the Saint Stephen House. The construction of the Saint Stephen House and the papal monetary donation made to it was also mentioned during the bilateral negotiations. Report of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda for the Politburo on the negotiations between the Hungarian government and the Vatican. January 31, 1967, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 304. The opening of the émigré priests’ new headquarters, the Saint Stephen House at Via del Casaletto 481, finally took place on August 20, 1967.

¹⁹⁵ Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 39.

¹⁹⁶ Information report on the denunciation by Sándor Csertő against Sándor Klempa. Budapest, November 23, 1964. ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs-2/5. “Hontalanok,” 215.

¹⁹⁷ Memorandum. Budapest, June 21, 1967. ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs-2/6. “Hontalanok,” 108.

¹⁹⁸ Fejérdy, “Hontalanok,” 88.

¹⁹⁹ Cf. Adriányi, *Ostpolitik*, 70, 108.

²⁰⁰ Sándor Kovács, for example, prior to the vote on the schema on the Virgin Mary declared he had read only König’s recommendation “because anyway I vote for what Cardinal König considers correct.” Report of agent “Kövér” on the Council. January 10, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. “Canale,” 47.

²⁰¹ Cardinal Giuseppe Antonio Ferretto’s recommendation: *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. I., *Pars I*, 235. Hamvas’s intervention: *ibid.*, 242–43.

²⁰² For the original draft text see: *ibid.*, 230–32. For the final version: *ibid.*, 254–56. On the circumstances surrounding the origin of the text’s, see Melloni, *Altra Roma*, 110, 131.

²⁰³ Report of agent “Pátkai” on the Council. December 16, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. “Canale,” 294. The situation did not change later either: “Until Councilor Földes spoke, Hamvas had not even thought of speaking up.” Report of agent “László” Veszprém, January 22, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. “Canale,” 98.

²⁰⁴ Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. “Canale,” 133.

- ²⁰⁵ Proposal on the preparation of the participation at Session Three of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 12, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. "Canale," 319-20, in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 153-54.
- ²⁰⁶ Information report on the Second Vatican Council drafted by ÁEH Head of Department László Nagy. Budapest, December 28, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-4/1966.
- ²⁰⁷ Report of ÁEH Chairman József Prantner for the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. December 30, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 290.
- ²⁰⁸ Information report on the Second Vatican Council drafted by ÁEH Head of Department László Nagy. Budapest, December 28, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-4/1966.
- ²⁰⁹ Report on the experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 6, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 140.
- ²¹⁰ Cf. above, Part II, Section 1.4.1.
- ²¹¹ Information report on the Vatican *nota verbale*. Budapest, December 12, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2, "Canale," 339-40.
- ²¹² Copy of the Hungarian minister's to Rome February 4, 1963 letter to Foreign Minister János Péter. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-3/d/1963.
- ²¹³ Proposal for the Politburo on the American-Hungarian relations and the situation of József Mindszenty. August 10, 1962, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 58; Minutes of the Politburo's session of August 11, 1962. MNL-OL M-KS 228. f. 5. cs. 275. ő. e. 2.
- ²¹⁴ Speech of János Kádár at the CC's session of March 8, 1963, in Ólmosi, *Mindszenty*, 98.
- ²¹⁵ Minutes of the Politburo's session of April 2, 1963. MNL-OL M-KS 228. f. 5. cs. 296. ő. e. 41-42.
- ²¹⁶ Report prepared for the Politburo by the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda and the ÁEH on the negotiations with Agostino Casaroli. May 10, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 115-16.
- ²¹⁷ For example, up until the election of the new pope, József Száll considered it practical to inform the Vatican indirectly through the Hungarian ecclesiastical representatives or other intermediaries that the resolution was not urgent for the Hungarian government. This was only possible if a change took place in the Church's general policy in the spirit of the Council. Copy of the Rome embassy's report of June 12, 1963 on the death of the pope. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-30/1963.

- ²¹⁸ Report prepared for the Politburo by the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda and the ÁEH on the negotiations with Agostino Casaroli. May 10, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 115–16.
- ²¹⁹ Annex to the report no. 001/105. on the Vatican State Secretariat and the internal situation of the Catholic Church. Budapest, May 8, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-18/1963.
- ²²⁰ Information report on the papal audience. Budapest, July 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/4. “Canale,” 4.
- ²²¹ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli sul suo colloquio con il Card. Mindszenty. Vaticano, 18 maggio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 75–76.
- ²²² Report prepared for the Politburo by the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda and the ÁEH on the negotiations with Agostino Casaroli. May 10, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 115–16.
- ²²³ Summary report on the second session of the Council. Budapest, February 3, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7, “Canale,” 210.
- ²²⁴ Report of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda for the Politburo on the negotiations between the Hungarian government and the Vatican. October 22, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 155–58.
- ²²⁵ Proposal for the Politburo on the negotiations with the Vatican and on the members of the Council delegation. Budapest, August 23, 1963. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1963/I. ő. e. 184.
- ²²⁶ Annex to the report no. 001/230 on the negotiations with the Vatican. Budapest, October 2, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-42/a/1963.
- ²²⁷ Annex to the report no. 001/273. on the conversations of the ambassador in Rome with the prelates attending the Council. Budapest, November 23, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-51/1963.
- ²²⁸ Report of the IM’s Division III/I. on the talks of Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád with Agostino Casaroli and the Hungarian council fathers’ negotiations at the Vatican Secretariat of State. December 9, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 176–77.
- ²²⁹ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulla ripresa dei contatti con il Governo ungherese [Budapest, 14–24 marzo 1964 (con n. 7 allegati)] 10 aprile 1964,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 121–24.
- ²³⁰ Report of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda and the ÁEH for the Politburo on the negotiations between the Hungarian government and the Vatican. March 24, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 180–81; “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulla ripresa dei contatti con il Governo ungherese [Budapest, 14–24 marzo 1964 (con n. 7 allegati)] 10 aprile 1964,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 121–24.

- ²³¹ Proposal to continue the Vatican negotiations. Budapest, June 1, 1964. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 5. cs. 335. ő. e. 298.
- ²³² Report of the Foreign Ministry on the Rome ambassador's talks with Casaroli. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1965/1. ő. e. 41–43. The Department of Agitation and Propaganda and the ÁEH submitted the report to the Politburo on April 26, 1965, which adopted the recommendation on April 27, 1964. Cf. Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 249–50.
- ²³³ Report of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda for the Politburo on the Hungarian–Vatican negotiations. July 9, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 273.
- ²³⁴ Report on the experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 6, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 140.
- ²³⁵ Proposal on the preparation of the participation at Session Three of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 12, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7–a. “Canale,” 317–18, in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 151–52.
- ²³⁶ Information report on the affirmations of Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely on the Church–state relations. Budapest, January 30, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/3. “Canale,” 206–207.
- ²³⁷ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli su un colloquio di Mons. Zabkar con Mons. Brezanóczy, Amm. Ap. di Eger. 4 dicembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 41.
- ²³⁸ Annex to the report no. 001/230 on the negotiations with the Vatican. Budapest, October 2, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 004–42/a/1963.
- ²³⁹ Report of agent “Illés” on his conversations with József Zágon and István Mester. November 8, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 167–69.
- ²⁴⁰ At the same time the Holy See attempted to gather data on the episcopal candidates by using the networks of unimpeded bishops and religious superiors general. Cf. Vatican opinion on the episcopal nominations. Budapest, May 7, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/6–a. “Canale,” 298.
- ²⁴¹ Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 136.
- ²⁴² Minutes of the Politburo's session of August 11, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 194.
- ²⁴³ The Pontifical Hungarian Institute's post-1964 operations, and the state security organs' new, long-term activity is thoroughly analyzed by Bandi, “Adalékok,” 174–88. Cf. also Fejérdy, “Regime comunista,” 256–80.
- ²⁴⁴ Report of ÁEH Chairman József Prantner for the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. December 30, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 292.

- ²⁴⁵ "Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulla ripresa dei contatti con il Governo ungherese [Budapest, 14–24 marzo 1964 (con n. 7 allegati)] 10 aprile 1964," in Barberini, *La politica*, 115–18.
- ²⁴⁶ The argument made during the negotiations is summarized in the text of the partial agreement. For the relevant point see Barberini, *La politica*, 165–67.
- ²⁴⁷ Information report on the council delegation. Budapest, November 11, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. 229–230; Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. "Canale," 137–38.
- ²⁴⁸ A 1960 draft had already declared: "The peace priest movement forms an organic part of ecclesiastical policy. In accordance with the party's ecclesiastical policy the State Office for Church Affairs directs and monitors the latter's activity. The movement's plans are prepared at the State Office for Church Affairs. The direct guidance of the State Office for Church Affairs results in the further political and organizational strengthening of the peace priest movement." Draft proposal on the guidance of the priest peace movement. Budapest, January 7, 1960. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–e. 001–1/1960.
- ²⁴⁹ Work plan for the tasks of the priest peace movement between August 1 and December 31, 1963. Budapest, August 9, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 001–6/1963.
- ²⁵⁰ The topic is summarized briefly in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 33–35.
- ²⁵¹ Minutes of the Politburo's session of April 2, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 85–86.
- ²⁵² Ibid.
- ²⁵³ Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád to Pope John XXIII. Budapest, April 26, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. V–37–8/1963; Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád to Cardinal Secretary of State Amleto Cicognani. Szeged, August 7, 1964. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. Cs–12–7/1964; Minutes of the Politburo's session of August 11, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 198–99; Proposal of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda for the Politburo on some issues to be settled with the Vatican. August 5, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 190–92.
- ²⁵⁴ Notes of Deputy Foreign Minister Béla Szilágyi on the signature of the 1964 partial agreement. MNL-OL XIX–J–1–j. Vatikán 1945–1964. IV–14/1964–65.
- ²⁵⁵ Minutes of the Politburo's session of September 22, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 219.
- ²⁵⁶ Pro memoria of József Prantner for the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on his negotiations in the Vatican. June 24, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 261.

- ²⁵⁷ Undated report of agent “Béla Molnár” on Session Two. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5, “Canale,” 69.
- ²⁵⁸ Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, January 17, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. “Canale,” 11.
- ²⁵⁹ Memorandum of Archdeacon Ferenc Csépanyi. Nyíregyháza, May 12, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-3/a/1966.

3.

Controlled Freedom: The Hungarian Catholic Church and the Second Vatican Council

3.1. THE COUNCIL DELEGATION

3.1.1. *Council fathers in Rome and in Hungary*

It is a peculiarity of the Hungarian church policy situation of the time that in the case of Hungarian attendance at the Second Vatican Council we must speak of a *council delegation*. In fact, the right and obligation to attend is tied to the ecclesiastical offices defined in canon law and stipulates attendance in person (CIC 1917 can. 223, 225). The chief pastors of a country, therefore, may not be represented by a delegation chosen—even freely—on the basis of one principle or another. Calling the group of Hungarian bishops traveling to the Council a “council delegation” was in fact an invention of the Hungarian regime almost as an attempt to legalize the episcopate’s limited participation.

Although the Holy See was forced to acknowledge the actual situation, it did not wish to yield on canonical principles. As was alluded to above, already prior to the first session, back when the presence of the Hungarian bishops at the Council appeared almost completely illusory, the Vatican had sent invitations to all those entitled. Since a limited group of Hungarian chief pastors was allowed to be present at the first session, it grasped every opportunity to urge the state to allow as many of the chief pastors as possible, if not all of them, to attend the Council. This wish figured in both the *nota verbale* presented at the end of the first session, and in Pope John XXIII’s message to the Hungarian people. Indeed, Casaroli himself repeatedly mentioned it during the negotiations. Finally Pope Paul VI likewise voiced his desire to this effect on several occasions. While the Holy See pressed throughout for all those entitled to be allowed to attend, it acknowledged with pleasure that the number of Hungarian council participants was

growing from session to session. In light of the status quo, this could be put down as no small success.

Despite their difficult position the Hungarian bishops for their part likewise attempted to honor their obligation to attend, and they left no stone unturned for the sake of obtaining permission to travel to the Council. Before the first session, when it was still uncertain whether anyone at all would be allowed to attend, Lajos Shvoy saw the defense of canonical principles as primary. He disagreed with the bishops individually applying for travel permits and thereby themselves creating an opportunity for the state to decide whose petitions it would accept and whose it would reject. By contrast the bishop of Székesfehérvár wished to exert pressure on the government by demanding unitary action, declaring that either every chief pastor should be allowed to attend the Council, or no one would go. The tactics of Endre Hamvas, who was willing to compromise, proved more successful than those of the “reactionary” Shvoy. With appropriate argumentation he managed to ensure that in the end he attended the first session not as the lone Hungarian but in the company of Sándor Kovács and Pál Brezanóczy.¹

Nevertheless, Shvoy saw these events as a vindication of his previous stance. He interpreted Pope John XXIII’s wish for the other Hungarian bishops to be likewise allowed to appear at subsequent sessions of the Ecumenical Council as applying to him in particular. He therefore took it for granted that he would be allowed to attend the second session and be able to brief the Holy See truthfully.² The news of the commencement of the Vatican–Hungarian negotiations further strengthened the hopes of those bishops who previously had remained home. A good example of the expectations was that even Bishop Bertalan Badalik of Veszprém, who was living under house arrest in Hejce, strongly trusted that he would be allowed to travel to Rome. In this connection the nuns running the house even expressed their congratulations to him during an in-house celebration.³

While the hopes raised by the bilateral negotiations in the case of the second session did not become a reality, the optimistic mood continued to gain strength nevertheless. Especially after the recall of the ministerial commissioners from the sees of the two “most reactionary” bishops (i.e., Hajdúdorog and Székesfehérvár),⁴ a result of the negotiations in the spring of 1964, both Miklós Dudás and Lajos Shvoy strongly trusted that they, too, would be allowed to attend the third session. It was in this awareness that in

June 1963 the two bishops again petitioned for approval to travel.⁵ In the interests of having their request approved (and in Shvoy's case, almost certainly following the instructional letter from the Secretariat of State),⁶ both showed a willingness to demonstrate a more lenient attitude towards the state: Bishop Dudás's intention to cooperate was recorded by the staff of the State Office for Church Affairs in June 1964, while one month later Lajos Shvoy's letter to József Prantner was assessed as a "clear gesture."⁷ Aware of the changed circumstances and their conciliatory attitude, in the middle of the summer the two bishops now took it for granted that they would be allowed to travel.⁸ Their hopes cannot be regarded as completely groundless either. Over the summer the ÁEH also contemplated a scenario which held out the prospect of allowing all the bishops to travel abroad. The Politburo did not agree with this possibility in any case,⁹ and among the "reactionary" chief pastors it approved only Norbert Legányi to travel.

The closing phase of the Council was preceded by particular anticipation. After the signing of the partial agreement the Holy See, it appeared, also sincerely hoped that all chief pastors would be allowed to attend the Council. This at least was indicated by a letter sent by the General Secretariat of the Council, dated July 16, 1965, specially calling on Endre Hamvas to strive to secure the appearance of all those entitled to attend the ecclesiastical assembly without exception.¹⁰ Already in the spring Hamvas himself had written to Prantner, asking that all the bishops be permitted to attend the closing session.¹¹ Later, after receiving General Secretary Pericle Felici's letter he again asked the chairman of the State Office for Church Affairs to agree to permit all the entitled chief pastors to travel to Rome.¹² In the second half of the summer those bishops regarded as unreliable in the eyes of the state likewise applied to the government with similar petitions. Bishop Shvoy was the first to request approval on July 30. This was followed by a letter from auxiliary Bishop Imre Kisberk of Székesfehérvár dated August 2, then petitions by Miklós Dudás on August 5, Gellért Belon on August 6 and Mihály Endrey on August 9.¹³ Imre Miklós sent a unitary reply to the letters, indicating that the government's decision would be relayed through Hamvas. On August 18, 1965, the deputy chairman of the ÁEH sent the list of persons approved to travel to the president of the Bench of Bishops,¹⁴ who informed those concerned in a letter five days later.¹⁵ Apart from those bishops who

were behaving loyally, or at least acceptably to the state, once again only one “reactionary” was authorized to attend the Council: Miklós Dudás.

In light of the above we may further nuance our previous assertion, according to which it was the party-state leadership that designated the members of the Hungarian council delegation. There is no doubt that the Hungarian chief pastors had minimal say in who was allowed to travel to the Council. Hamvas’s argument prior to the first session in any case achieved success. By contrast, those bishops who were classified as “reactionary” vainly asked the state to authorize them to attend. The state approved Norbert Legányi’s and later Miklós Dudás’s attendance not because of their petitions but rather as a kind of compromise. The fact of the matter was that the Hungarian delegation was assembled from one session to the next as the sum of the demands of the Holy See and the Hungarian government. There can be no doubt that the demands of the government of the Hungarian People’s Republic (namely, that it wished to allow only persons who could be adequately monitored to go to Rome), played the dominant role, though the Vatican’s repeatedly voiced demand, for all entitled chief pastors to be allowed take part in the Council cannot be completely ignored either.

3.1.2. The delegation’s travel, accommodations and expenses

Similar to the assembling of the council delegation alongside the government and the Holy See the Hungarian chief pastors played likewise a secondary role in organizing the travel and stay in Rome. In obtaining the necessary travel documents (passports, as well as exit and entry visas) their helplessness was increased by the fact that the leaders of Hungarian ecclesiastical policy consistently waited until the last minute to inform Endre Hamvas about who the members of the delegation would be. Because of the limited time available, it was particularly obvious that the acquisition of the travel papers was arranged through the State Office for Church Affairs—out of turn.¹⁶ A clear reflection of the process is that prior to the third council session ÁEH Chairman József Prantner asked the head of the Interior Ministry’s Passport Section, Police Lieutenant Colonel Károly Szabó, to extend the passports of those traveling to the World Eucharistic Congress in Bombay to include Africa as well, since the chief pastors would stop also in Egypt.¹⁷ It is characteristic

furthermore of the Hungarian authorities' working methods that the council delegates received the travel documents at the luncheon held in their honor prior to the fourth session.¹⁸

An important symbolic event in the council delegation's journey was the sendoff in Budapest, as well as the welcome and farewell ceremonies in Rome. As a rule, the sendoff in Budapest was organized by the presidium of *Actio Catholica* according to the scenario elaborated by the ÁEH.¹⁹ It was indicative of the political dimension of the trip of the council delegation departing for the sessions, for instance, that not only the Bench of Bishops and the clergy had themselves represented at the sendoff of the council fathers, but that the deputy chairman of the State Office for Church Affairs, Imre Miklós, was also present.²⁰

The council fathers traveled to the first two sessions by train, adding brief, one- or two-day stopovers in Vienna. Thus, the chief pastors who departed for the first session on October 4, 1962 arrived in Rome on October 6, while those heading to the second session arrived on September 26, likewise after a brief stay in Vienna.²¹ The bishops attending the third and fourth sessions no longer stopped in Vienna but traveled to Rome on scheduled flights, on September 18, 1964 and September 9, 1965 respectively.²²

The Hungarian government had little say how the Hungarian council fathers in Rome were received. Nevertheless, the presence of the Hungarian embassy staff was intended as a sign that the relations between Church and state in Hungary were balanced. Moreover, in the case of the first session the Hungarian government also tried to prepare as much as possible for unexpected turns of events in the hitherto unfamiliar situation. It was with respect to potential provocations that Counselor Miklós Bárd was accompanied by Consul János Bogye, who simultaneously acted as a Hungarian intelligence officer in Rome.²³

However, the employees of the Hungarian foreign mission played only a secondary role in welcoming the Hungarian council fathers to Rome. By its very nature, the welcome ceremony for the chief pastors arriving to attend the Council was primarily an ecclesiastical affair. Neither the Hungarian bishops nor the Hungarian authorities had any say in the composition of the welcoming committee. Thus, they had to content themselves with trying to draw conclusions about how the Holy See viewed the Hungarians based on the personnel of the committee arriving to meet the Hungarian council

delegation. In the case of the first session, for example, they were somewhat disappointed to learn that, instead of the Vatican sending its own representatives, only the leaders of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute, József Zágon and István Mester, along with the Hungarian-born Piarist superior general, Vince Tomek, went to greet the arriving Hungarian travelers at the Termini Railway Station. This reception was incomparably less ceremonious than that given to the Polish bishops, for whose arrival Pope John XXIII also sent his own secretary to represent him. Nor did the revelation that the Holy See usually sent its higher-ranking employees to meet the arrivals only when there was also a cardinal present do anything to lessen their disappointment.²⁴ Precisely for this reason, they were subsequently happy to note that, apart from the Hungarian émigré priests Adriano Meile, a secretary in the Vatican Secretariat of State, also appeared to welcome the Hungarians taking part in the second session, as did Luigi Bongianino for the fourth session.²⁵ The deputation assembled to send off the departing Hungarian bishops heading home also evolved in parallel with the change observable in the makeup of the welcoming committee in Rome. Whereas only the representatives of the emigration were present to send off the Hungarians returning home at the end of the first session, on December 4, in the sendoff of the Hungarian council delegation traveling from the fourth session to Budapest, apart from the émigrés the substitute of the Secretariat of State, Angelo Dell'Acqua, also made a special appearance to bid the chief pastors farewell.²⁶

The assignment of the Hungarian council fathers' lodgings in Rome belonged to the exclusive competence of the Holy See. During the council sessions the Hungarian chief pastors were the guests of the Holy See, and both their journey to Rome and stay there were paid for by the Vatican.²⁷ At the first session the Hungarian delegation was housed in the *Domus Mariae*, located at Via Aurelia 481. At first, the Hungarian authorities judged the accommodations to be unfavorable, because in their opinion by placing them there the Holy See could keep the Hungarian prelates under watch.²⁸ There were also some among the attendants who for a time believed that the Hungarians had been assigned these accommodations as a way of keeping them away from the Vatican. As the situation became clearer, however, it had to be conceded that accommodations for the Hungarian delegation more suitable than the *Domus Mariae* would have been difficult to find.²⁹

However, the *Domus Mariae* proved to be expressly good accommodations not merely because of the pleasant environment, the high-quality services and good infrastructure. Though the accounts coming from the members of the Hungarian council delegation hardly reveal it, the headquarters of the women's section of the Italian *Actio Catholica* likewise held special significance in terms of council work. Apart from the Hungarian and several African bishops, the members of the Brazilian episcopal conference staying in the house, for example, soon recognized that the spacious building, featuring several communal rooms and a large-sized auditorium, could be viewed as an advantageous residence. According to the recollections of Dom José Gonçalves Costa, who was elected secretary of the National Conference of Brazilian Bishops in 1964, the *Domus Mariae* functioned not merely as a simple residence but was also the scene of intensive work. Apart from the Brazilian chief pastors, it was here that the Italian bishops held their conferences, and particularly important were the public lectures held by various council experts for the other episcopates. Last but not least, beginning with the second session it was the *Domus Mariae* that provided a home every Friday afternoon for the "Conference of Delegates," which supported reforms.³⁰

The Hungarian council fathers received accommodations in the *Domus Mariae* during the later sessions as well. During the second session, however, with the official justification that the Hungarian council delegation had sent word late, only four members of the bishops' entourage were given rooms in the building. The rest were housed in the order house at Via di Torre Rossa 80, run by the Franciscan Sisters.³¹ The physical separation of the delegation into two, however, was explained, at least in part, by the Vatican's disapproval: as early as September 11, 1963 Archbishop Pericle Felici, the Council's general secretary, emphasized in a letter addressed to Endre Hamvas that the council fathers were allowed to take with them only one delegate each.³² Casaroli likewise later remarked that the large entourage was damaging the bishops' prestige.³³ Based on the Hungarian émigré priests, it may be surmised that the diplomatic tone of Casaroli's remark concealed the fact that the Holy See was aware that a part of the sizeable entourage was made up of persons sent by the state to monitor the bishops. Therefore, an important criterion when housing them was also to separate as far as

possible these persons, who served a purely monitoring role and otherwise did not take part in the work of the Council, from the council fathers.³⁴

Because of the need to monitor the council fathers, the Hungarian state organs considered it important even later on that the Hungarian delegation be housed in one place. Therefore, during the third session they did not approve of Norbert Legányi staying at the Benedictine Order's headquarters in Rome, the Sant'Anselmo. Nor did they appreciate that instead of the *Domus Mariae* Sándor Kovács wished to avail himself of accommodations where he could receive dietary meals.³⁵ And they also disapproved of splitting up the council delegation during the fourth session, when the idea was raised that some of the bishops should receive lodgings in the suitably monitored Pontifical Hungarian Institute, which had been returned in the fall of the previous year.³⁶

The Holy See not only paid for the Hungarian council delegation's travel expenses and accommodations in Rome but even gave the chief pastors a little spending money as well.³⁷ To prevent a one-sided dependence on the Vatican from developing, however, the Hungarian government likewise attempted to contribute to the travelers' spending needs. It is known, for instance, that prior to the first session Imre Miklós asked the deputy finance minister, Béla Sulyok, to permit the members of the delegation to Rome to purchase hard currency equivalent to 70 USD per person through the Hungarian Foreign Commerce Bank (*Magyar Külkereskedelmi Bank*). The special permission was necessary, since otherwise the bank could have issued only five dollars per person to holders of passports marked "visit."³⁸ Despite this József Száll felt that the Hungarian bishops did not have sufficient money at their disposal. He reached this conclusion when, during one reception Endre Hamvas, discreetly but in the minister's sight, began counting the money in his wallet. Based on what he had witnessed, Száll recommended that Budapest improve the bishops' money supply; after consulting with the chairman of the State Office for Church Affairs, he was instructed to offer the delegation a loan in a sufficient amount.³⁹ Hamvas, however, refused the assistance he was offered with thanks.⁴⁰

The leaders of Hungarian church policy considered the council delegation's monetary supply important not only in order to prevent financial dependence on the Vatican as well as to favorably influence the delegation's morale, but also because it simultaneously regarded the Hungarian chief pastors' journey

as a semi-official state trip. This is indicated by, among other things, the fact that before the first session Imre Miklós buttressed his petition to the deputy finance minister by arguing that the requested 70-dollar allowance, instead of the regular five dollars per person, was still only fifty percent of what they would receive per diem in the event of official travel.⁴¹ József Prantner put it even more openly before the third session. In a letter addressed to the finance minister, Mátyás Tímár, the chairman of the State Office for Church Affairs requested 90,000 forints in foreign currency from the Hungarian Foreign Commerce Bank to help cover the expenses of the Hungarian delegation traveling to the Council and the World Eucharistic Congress in Bombay, which totaled 131,570 forints in foreign currency, with the justification that the trip was “semi-official.”⁴²

3.1.3. The internal relations of the Hungarian delegation

The internal relations of the Hungarian council delegation were fundamentally determined by the fact that its members had been selected, or at least approved, by the Hungarian authorities. As a consequence of the state’s obvious intention to influence and control them, an atmosphere of mistrust prevailed among the members participating in the delegation. During the first session, the internal tensions stemming from mistrust and personal conflicts in any case did not yet reveal themselves, since the delegation at this time was still acting for the most part in unity.⁴³ Beginning with the second session, however, the situation changed.

The mistrust among the members of the delegation worked above all to the detriment of united action and joint work. The Hungarian bishops themselves did not discuss the assigned tasks amongst themselves and attempted to keep the attendants away from everything.⁴⁴ The secrecy the council fathers maintained amongst themselves and lack of consultations stemmed partly from being ill-informed. Most times the Hungarian bishops sat through the Council’s general congregations without understanding what was even being discussed. Often they did not even know which schema the Council was discussing on the given day. It was almost certainly due to a lack of information, for example, that at the end of the second session Hamvas did not consult in advance with his companions about whom to

select as new members of the council committees.⁴⁵ However, the fact that the State Office for Church Affairs explicitly urged this also played a crucial role in his failure to hold consultations.⁴⁶ The bishops, not without reason, feared that the goal of the desired regular gatherings was to monitor and influence the activity of each individual. Under such circumstances everyone thought it better if he attempted to conceal the information that had come to his attention and operate alone.⁴⁷ Not least this had the consequence that the members of the delegation preferred to withdraw into (apparent) passivity, or were preoccupied by their own problems, and placed their individual interests above the interests of the delegation as articulated in the state's expectations.⁴⁸

The mistrust manifest within the delegation was directed first and foremost towards the attendants. Like the Hungarian émigré priests, it was primarily within their ranks that both the Holy See and the members of the council delegation presumed the presence of persons cultivating a special relationship with the state organs.⁴⁹ Under the impact of the émigré press's attacks several of the attendants felt outright as though they no longer had anything to lose, and in their despair they defended "the concept of the progressive Church" even more resolutely "than they would have had the courage to do [...] under different circumstances in Rome."⁵⁰ An outstanding example of the mistrust towards the attendants is that the Hungarian bishops still preferred, in communicating with the Holy See, to avail themselves of the services of the Hungarian émigrés rather than Imre Timkó, the council administrator appointed under state pressure.⁵¹ For Endre Hamvas suspicion of the attendants reached such a level that he would not allow his more important letters "to be typed by those returning to Pest."⁵² Among those back home he most trusted his nephew, István Hamvas, and so it was through him that he stayed in touch with the Secretariat of State.⁵³ This favoritism led to further tensions within the delegation, because the exceptional treatment Hamvas showed towards his nephew was regarded as interference in the jurisdiction of the administrators designated by the state authorities—Timkó, and later Vitányi.⁵⁴

Besides his mistrust of the attendants, it was almost certainly the need to meet the Holy See's expectations that lay behind Hamvas's refusal even to attempt to secure the attendants' participation in the papal audience during the second session, despite the state's resolute wishes for this.⁵⁵ Apart from the

bishops Hamvas announced only Brezanóczy for the papal audience while trying to exclude the attendants. Ultimately it was Brezanóczy who—despite the émigré priests' resistance⁵⁶—also secured a brief audience for the members of the entourage following the bishops' reception.⁵⁷

Thus, apart from the fear of state surveillance and the mistrust among the members of the delegation, the desire to meet Vatican expectations also increased the division within the Hungarian council delegation. Endre Hamvas, while attempting to maintain his loyalty to the Hungarian state, regarded it as an important task that he regain the prestige he had lost in the eyes of the Vatican in 1956 and have his leading role at the head of the Hungarian Church accepted, as well as earn the cardinal's title in the event that the Mindszenty affair was resolved.⁵⁸ In addition what has been mentioned, the conduct of the bishop of Csanád, which from the government's point of view was not always favorable, was explained by how easily he could be influenced: his positive stances in Hungary had been thanks to the fact that suitable persons had negotiated with him. In Rome, however, he came under different influences, "and precisely on account of his character it was always the last conversation that dominated in his position."⁵⁹

Nurturing a special relationship with the state organs, Pál Brezanóczy for the sake of his own appointment as bishop attempted to take the Holy See's expectations maximally into account. Moreover, he considered his improving chances at the Vatican more important than even the unity of the council delegation. Therefore, in the interests of the goal, which basically coincided with the state's plans as well, "even at the expense of the delegation's work he was too active, and sometimes overtly attacked those whom the emigration also attacked."⁶⁰ At the same time, following his appointment as bishop his attempts to implement in Hungary the principles that had been articulated at the Vatican attested to his sincerity regarding the fulfillment of the Holy See's demands.⁶¹

The rivalry among the chief pastors caused additional inner tensions in the council delegation. For example, after the view emerged within the episcopate that among the bishops appointed in 1964 Rome vigorously supported Casaroli's former schoolmate, József Bánk because in him it saw someone who suited both sides, they began to take a dim view of the newly consecrated auxiliary bishop of Győr. Bánk's self-important, professorial and also somewhat harsh manner of speaking, which differed from the style

accepted among the Hungarian chief pastors, also increased his fellow bishops' antipathy.⁶²

While Endre Hamvas and Pál Brezanóczy more or less succeeded in aligning their conduct in relation to Vatican and state expectations, the demands of meeting these dual expectations simultaneously represented a serious psychological burden for some of the Hungarian chief pastors. The best example of this is the auxiliary bishop of Esztergom, Imre Szabó, who returning from the Council's second session himself urged the State Office for Church Affairs to allow him to relate his experiences. Among other things he declared: "To be honest, here at home I'd even prefer Hugyag [the place of his forced confinement] to Rome. [...] Undoubtedly there is in me a certain sense of fear. This ongoing, permanent state that aims to avoid saying anything wrong to anyone or anywhere, or to do something wrong, or being made to say something wrong and lose my honor before the state here at home forever has taken a tremendous toll on my nerves."⁶³

The council delegation's lack of inner unity manifested itself most strikingly during the second and third sessions. During the fourth session, despite the fact that the delegation's position was no longer as advantageous as after the signing of the Vatican–Hungarian partial agreement in 1964 that had attracted a lot of attention, the conduct and activity of the entire delegation—not least following repeated state warnings—showed a more uniform picture. Nevertheless, the entourage continued to experience the tensions prevailing among the bishops.⁶⁴ But after the leader of the delegation, Endre Hamvas, forced to travel home on November 9, 1965 due to his illness, the earlier unity slackened somewhat, and the delegation, by this time headed by Pál Brezanóczy, split into two groups. The older council fathers took part in the joint work to a minimal degree. The younger bishops, however, (first and foremost Brezanóczy, Ijjas and Cserháti) exerted themselves more and also attempted to activate the other members. In any case, the Hungarian authorities on the whole positively assessed the activity of the delegation attending the fourth session because they were advocating the "progressive" church position more openly and resolutely than previously. Indeed, they thwarted the emigration's intrigues more successfully and also succeeded in defending themselves against the attacks aimed at them within the Secretariat of State.⁶⁵

3.2. HUNGARIAN CONTRIBUTIONS TO THE WORK OF THE COUNCIL

3.2.1. *A passive presence*

The Hungarian delegation played a modest role in the work of the Second Vatican Council: its activity essentially was limited just to being present. The Hungarian bishops—especially during the first two sessions—were incapable of playing a truly active role first and foremost because of their advanced age and the concomitant weakness and illness. The helplessness that came with advanced age was most obvious in the case of Kálmán Papp, who attended the second session. Although he tolerated the Roman climate well despite his advanced age, he required constant medical care and as a consequence of his declining mental faculties he often did not even know where he was. For the other bishops therefore it meant a serious burden that at the Council someone always had to escort him. Nevertheless, he spent the bulk of his time not attending the general congregations but rather in the company of the émigré priests—first of all József Zágon.⁶⁶ Sándor Kovács also required constant medical supervision, and several times during his stay in Rome (first session, fourth session) he even required hospitalization. Thus, he, too, took only little part in the Council's work, appearing at the general congregations only every third day and using his trip abroad most of all for rest.⁶⁷ However, what hampered the Hungarian council delegation's activity the most was the similarly weak physical condition of the man leading the delegation, Endre Hamvas. His forgetfulness and senility, increasing due to his advanced age, could be detected already during the first session. During the fourth session his health had deteriorated so much that he was forced to return home to Hungary.⁶⁸

In addition, a lack of adequate language skills and negotiating ability also played a major role in the Hungarian council fathers' relative passivity. After the second session Bishop Imre Szabó characterized the situation—perhaps in a somewhat more pessimistic light than reality—as follows: “It is an extremely weak group that represents the Hungarian Church and ecclesiastical affairs at the Council. One can hardly expect anything from this anemic band. Unfortunately, in this group there is only one Brezanóczy, who knows languages, understands canon law, and has diplomatic sense and a presence that corresponds to the international ecclesiastical standard of

today. [...] We were shocked to realize that we are pathetically ignorant and backward in comparison to the requirements there. Almost nothing can be accomplished in such a place without knowledge of Italian, French or English. As far as our knowledge of Latin is concerned, except for Brezanóczy and Hamvas it is either 'ceremonial Latin' or 'kitchen Latin,' but in no way classical."⁶⁹

Comprehension of what was said in the council hall was made further difficult by the differing accents with which the fathers from various nations spoke Latin. For this reason the Hungarian bishops did not understand a substantial part of the interventions made at the Council's general congregations. They also read the official press releases slowly and received information about the topics discussed primarily from the (Hungarian) press.⁷⁰ With the appointment of the new bishops, the majority of whom had graduated in Rome, beginning with the third session the situation improved somewhat, though even after the papal audience granted during the fourth session it was noted that "difficulties arose in understanding the pope's Latin-language address because the bishops do not know the language perfectly."⁷¹ It was nevertheless a serious step forward in terms of joining in the work of the council that during the third session Cserháti and Brezanóczy were now taking part in the German bishops' conference weekly.⁷²

Finally, undoubtedly a role in the Hungarian council fathers' inactivity was also played by the fact that in many cases the passivity concealed the intent to evade state expectations. Endre Hamvas often deliberately used the forgetfulness that came with his advanced age so as not to have to share certain information with the state.⁷³ Based on Sándor Kovács's activity in implementing the council resolutions in his own diocese, it may likewise be presumed that many times his illness was only a pretext to thwart the expectations of the state organs.⁷⁴ As the aforementioned example of Imre Szabó indicates, the spiritual burden, which stemmed from the need to comply with both the demands of the Church and the state, had a paralyzing effect on some of the council fathers.

However, the bishops were pleased whenever the Holy See asked them to perform various liturgical duties. For example, Endre Hamvas's opportunity to concelebrate with the pope in a prominent place in the council hall on November 6, 1962, ranked as a particular distinction. Moreover, at the mass opening each general congregation in a number of cases the Hungarian

council fathers were allowed to enthrone the Book of the Gospels. Similarly, on November 19, 1965 following Hamvas's recommendation Bishop Miklós Dudás of Hajdúdorog was allowed to celebrate a Hungarian-language, Greek-rite mass in Saint Peter's Basilica.⁷⁵

The council fathers gladly honored social invitations as well. In addition to attending the Council's general congregations, a substantial part of their stay in Rome was spent attending various receptions and lunch invitations. The bishops' engagements of this kind are well captured in Endre Hamvas's own account of the first session, delivered at the bishops' conference:

In honor of the Hungarian ordinaries, on the afternoon of Nov. 15 the Pontifical Hungarian Institute in Rome (Via Giulia 1) organized a reception at which the entire Hungarian clergy in Rome appeared. The reception took place in a joyful, festive atmosphere. A reception in honor of all the council fathers was also held on Oct. 30 by the president of the Italian Republic in the Quirinal Palace, and by the mayor of Rome on Nov. 5 in the Capitolium. The bishop of Csanád received an invitation to the first, and the bishop of Szombathely to the second, while all three Hungarian Ordinaries attended the event organized by the diplomats accredited at the Vatican (Palais Barberini) on Dec. 2, which represented an exceptional treatment, because other nations were only represented by one member each. Incidentally, there was no lack of invitations to lunch. Beginning on Sunday, Oct. 14 until Sunday, Dec. 2 we dined out every Sunday: at the bishop of Fatima, in the Piarists' motherhouse, at the Germanicum, in the Cistercian motherhouse, at the Pontifical Hungarian Institute in Rome, and at the residences of various prelates. [...] The attention shown by the Austrian episcopate was quite kind. They invited us to the reception they held on Oct. 12 and to their luncheon on December 7. Among the Austrian bishops Bishop István László of Burgenland, who came to the Domus Mariae on a fraternal visit and welcomed us with great affection when we returned the visit, declared that he felt particularly close to us. His eminence the archbishop of Vienna, Cardinal [Franz] König himself, was especially considerate, inviting us to dinner while passing through on the way to Rome, visiting the bishop of Csanád on the occasion of his nameday, etc.⁷⁶

Finally, it must be mentioned that some of the Hungarian council fathers displayed great activity in obtaining financial aid. Aside from the assistance received from the pope they held intensive negotiations on funding the Hungarian dioceses with *Caritas Internationalis*. At the same time, József Cserhádi also successfully took advantage of his good relations with his former schoolmate, Cardinal Julius Döpfner, in order to secure more substantial sums from the German Bench of Bishops.⁷⁷

3.2.2. *Hungarian interventions and proposals*

However, the Hungarian delegation's participation in the Council was not characterized by total passivity. During the four sessions the council fathers, in accordance with their own interests, or external expectations—in writing or verbally—commented on the draft texts of three council constitutions and four conciliar decrees.

During the first session Sándor Kovács twice intervened in the discussion on the liturgical constitution under preparation. In his first intervention, concerning the Order of the Mass, he requested an increase in the number of prefaces. He argued this by stating that prior to the Tridentine Reform almost every mass had had its own preface, and even though these had been abolished almost without exception, beginning in the nineteenth century an increasing number of dioceses and religious orders had received permission to use proper prefaces, which in and of itself had led to an increase in the number of prefaces. Taking into account historical traditions and development, Kovács for this reason recommended that apart from the proper prefaces introduced by Benedict XV and Pius XI for the Requiem Mass as well as for the Feasts of Saint Joseph, the Sacred Heart and Christ the King proper prefaces should be introduced into the Roman Missal at least for Advent, Corpus Christi and the Sundays of the liturgical year.⁷⁸

In his other intervention, which he submitted in writing, Kovács asked the Holy Father to allow complete or partial leave to those priests who administered the sacrament of the anointing of the sick. The bishop of Szombathely buttressed his request by arguing that Pope John XXIII had previously authorized—under the appropriate conditions—such leave for those performing physical labor and those suffering in body or in soul.

Therefore, those priests who often assumed great efforts to reach the sick and were able to administer to them the sacrament of the anointing of the sick should not be denied the benefits of taking leave either.⁷⁹

It may be presumed that Sándor Kovács's two interventions regarding the liturgical schema reflected the recommendations of Polikárp Radó, who was attending as a member of the entourage of the Hungarian council delegation. This is indicated above all else by the fact that the bishop of Szombathely's recommendation on increasing the number of prefaces harmonizes with a similar proposal made by the Brazilian Clemente Isnard, bishop of Nuova Friburgo. Among the Brazilian council fathers, Isnard, in charge of liturgical questions, was known to have asked Radó, who was also residing in the *Domus Mariae*, for his advice when compiling the Brazilian proposals.⁸⁰

A number of times the Hungarian council fathers intervened in the debate over the constitution of the Church as well. First, during the second session in connection with the question of the permanent diaconate Endre Hamvas submitted a written proposal in which he described the unique institution of *licentiatius*, introduced into Hungary at the time of the Turkish occupation and which could be regarded as a kind of forerunner of the permanent diaconate that formed the subject of debate.⁸¹ Encouraged by the embassy, Hamvas originally intended to address the issue verbally, but his speech, drafted with the help of József Bánk, was late and thus he could only submit it to the Council Secretariat in writing.⁸²

During the second session Sándor Kovács likewise submitted his intervention on the fourth chapter of the draft text on the Church, which he drafted with the assistance of the Cistercians, in writing.⁸³ In it the bishop of Szombathely pointed out that the schema spoke too briefly and only in generalities about holiness as the calling of every member of the Church. For this reason Kovács stressed that the text of Point 30 as structured was misleading, since by highlighting the calling of bishops and priests to holiness it created the false impression that holiness was the privilege of a mere few. To make the message of the document more balanced he therefore recommended articulating the means leading to holiness in more detail in the text. The means available to everyone, the practice of theological and moral virtues, and the importance of prayer, self-denial and the life of holiness should also be addressed before the gospel counsels accessible to the few.

Among the means leading to holiness Kovács placed particular emphasis on the regular reading of the sacred Scriptures and other spiritual texts. Quoting the words of the Church Fathers and the popes he reminded that reading the Scriptures was likewise an important mediator of grace, and played a significant role in gaining the fruits of the sacraments, above all Holy Communion. At the same time, apart from a more detailed listing of the means leading to holiness, he considered it essential also to emphasize that becoming holy is grace: this was in the first place not the result of human effort but rather the work of God. Finally, in the closing part of his submission Kovács recommended that the document expound more clearly the concept of poverty included among the gospel counsels. This was needed particularly because in light of the great misery that could be witnessed in the world the exhortation to “poverty,” unless a sober explanation were attached to it, could easily become open to attack. It was for this reason that he proposed recognizing in the constitution the justness of man’s desire to acquire more and more goods, and emphasizing, rather than the formulation highlighting the aspects of *fugae mundi*, the importance of *transformatio mundi* instead.⁸⁴ The arguments raised in Kovács’s submission were taken into account during the subsequent revisions of the draft text on the Church. Numerous elements of his recommendations—even if not with the level of detail recommended by the bishop of Szombathely—can be found in the constitution *Lumen Gentium* in its final form.⁸⁵

During the second session the Hungarian council fathers prepared two submissions on the draft text “On the Bishops and Governance of Dioceses” (*de Episcopis ac dioecesium regimine*). The document, associated with the name of Endre Hamvas, dealt exclusively with the question of the episcopal conferences which the schema had raised. He presented the workings of the Hungarian episcopal conferences, which had been operating for more than 100 years, and based on the experiences he recommended a few concrete changes to the text. In addition to the bishops’ national conferences he urged the international cooperation of chief pastors. Based on the rules of the Hungarian episcopal conference he made a further recommendation about how to define the scope of participants in the conference, and what was to be done in the case of the substitution of impeded bishops. Likewise based on Hungarian experiences, he proposed that the bishops of each country hold at least two conferences annually. He recommended defining more precisely

who were included among the “prelates” (*presul*) figuring in the text, as well as whether the episcopal conference secretary prescribed by the draft was to be elected from among the members of the body or should be an outsider. Finally, regarding the legal force of resolutions adopted by the episcopates he recommended an important change. Instead of the distinction made between resolutions of “obligatory” (*obligantes*) and “non-obligatory” (*non obligantes*) force appearing in the original draft text, he urged instead making a distinction between “directive” (*directiva*) and “preceptive” (*praeceptiva*).⁸⁶ Nevertheless, the listing of decisions of the episcopal conferences of varying force was not incorporated into the final text of *Christus Dominus*, but merely the conditions of the decisions with binding juridical force were defined. Such were decisions voted by two thirds of the members of the episcopal conference with a deliberative vote and approved by the Holy See.⁸⁷

For the draft text entitled “On the Bishops and Governance of the Dioceses,” the Hungarian council fathers also prepared a joint submission which, unlike Hamvas’s text, touched on all the topics contained in the document.⁸⁸ The Hungarian bishops agreed with the recommendation of other council fathers that the schema need to be harmonized with the teachings of the draft text *De Ecclesia* in all respects. Thus, the document on the bishops essentially had to deal with the practical implementation of the principles articulated in it. As a condition of this, they considered it necessary to formulate an ecclesiastical constitution which defined, based on the distinction between elements belonging to the essence of the Church and those that did not, the rights of each member of the Church as well as the relationship between papal primacy and the task of the bishops relating to governance of the Universal Church.

The proposal listed one by one those forums where bishops could be of help to the pope in governing the universal Church and also formulated a few recommendations concerning this. It suggested that not only tradition play a role in appointing the College of Cardinals but that the pope ensure that every nation had a representative in that body. The Hungarian bishops buttressed their proposal with a parallel taken from international law: in the UN even the smallest member state has a legitimate representative. At the next advisory forum a proposal was made to set up a central episcopal council, to which one elected representative would belong for every ten bishops, the resulting 200- to 300-strong body would thus be able to provide

the pope with appropriate advice on major questions. This recommendation of the Hungarian bishops made during the second session may have played a role later in Pope Paul VI's establishment of the Synod of Bishops in his *motu proprio Apostolica Sollicitudo* of September 15, 1965.⁸⁹ Finally, the Hungarian council fathers also came forward with a unique proposal for facilitating cooperation between the bishops and the pope. On the analogy of the Vatican diplomats present in each state (nuncios, internuncios, apostolic delegates, etc.), they proposed that the bishops of the world Church could assist the pope's work of governing the Universal Church by creating for each ecclesiastical province a permanent procurator of episcopal rank in Rome (*procurator permanens Ecclesiae particularis*). These procurators knowing the customs and situation of the given country, could effectively assist the areal rapporteurs of the Roman Curia, who often lacked sufficient expertise.

Speaking of the bishops' power of ecclesiastical government, the Hungarian council fathers urged that their duty not be restricted merely to carrying out the Holy See's decrees but that they be allowed to possess sufficient autonomy in matters of lesser import or of a local nature (e.g., reservations relating to the area of *beneficia et officia*). Nonetheless, they warned against the danger of excessive decentralization, pointing out that the unitary central control of the Universal Church conformed to the tendency towards unification observable in the modern world. The Hungarian council fathers called attention to an additional value of dependence on Rome: the excessive decentralization of the world Church and the exaggerated autonomy of the national churches could endanger the Church's freedom. It was the experience of dictatorships that was articulated in the following sentence of the Hungarian submission: "*qui enim a Sancta Sede libertatem suam salvare volunt, alterius societatis inciderent servitutem* (for, whoever wishes to preserve his own liberty vis-à-vis the Holy See might fall into the servitude of another society [i.e., the state])."⁹⁰

Next, the Hungarian bishops asked for consistency in the question of decentralization that was being discussed at the Council, emphasizing that, just as the pope needed the help of the body of bishops in governing the Church, so too each bishop required the advice of his priests. To provide an institutional framework for this the Hungarian council fathers wished for the re-interpretation of the ever diminishing role of the chapters to be reinter-

preted as advisory bodies of the bishops. In any case, the decree *Christus Dominus* spoke about a presbyteral senate to be set up to assist the bishop independently of the chapters.⁹¹

The Hungarian council fathers, while agreeing with the definition of the concept of coadjutor bishop proposed in the document, expressed their demand that the text refer to the Holy See appointing auxiliary bishops invested with such a right of succession rarely and only after prior consultation with the chief pastor of the diocese. A failure to consult in advance, after all, could lead to internal conflicts and ultimately to a dual governance of the diocese. In connection with the auxiliary bishops (*auxiliaris*), in their submission the Hungarian bishops recommended defining the former's jurisdiction precisely, lest a bishop clinging too much to his power would happen to deprive them of numerous prerogatives.⁹² The joint submission went on to treat the issue of episcopal conferences, essentially reiterating Hamvas's text, and then came out in favor of partitioning excessively large dioceses and merging smaller bishoprics. In this context the specific recommendation that the Holy See extend the jurisdiction of the Greek Catholic bishop of Hajdúdorog to all Greek Catholics living in the territory of Hungary applied not explicitly to the text of the document but rather to peculiar Hungarian requirements. Finally, to avoid misunderstandings, the Hungarian bishops recommended using the words *synodus* and *concilium* in the schema consistently: because the 1917 Code of Canon Law had designated the former term to refer exclusively to the diocesan synod, it was more correct in all instances to use the latter term in reference to Vatican II.⁹³

During the second session only a single intervention was heard in the council hall on the part of the Hungarians: at the LXXII General Congregation Endre Hamvas addressed the debate over the document on ecumenism. Originally he had asked József Bánk and Imre Timkó to elaborate his intervention, but he ended up setting aside the text they had drafted and read a speech he had composed himself.⁹⁴ However, because his speech exceeded the time allotted, the moderator on duty stopped him, and the rest of his comments were attached to the conciliar documents in writing only.⁹⁵ Hamvas started from the premise that Hungary's peculiar situation, namely, its location on the border between the Eastern and Western churches, made his country especially interested in the cause of ecumenism. Based on

historical and personal experiences he went on to articulate two basic requirements with respect to ecumenism: first, he called it an important condition for ecumenism to gain sufficient knowledge of the other side's teaching, mentality and grievances, real or imagined; and second, he stated that Catholics' exemplary behavior and attractive lifestyle were more essential than all this. Even in his intervention though Hamvas agreed with the definition of ecumenism formulated in the schema, his outlook was permeated not by the ecumenism adopted at the Council but rather the spirit of traditional unionism. This is indicated above all by the fact that he regarded the Greek Catholic Church, in union with Rome, as a model for the Orthodox churches. In addition he particularly stressed that a serious obstacle to ecumenism on the part of the Romanian and Serbian Orthodox Churches was the definitive national character of these churches, since they appraised conversion to the Catholic faith simultaneously as repudiation of their nations as well. It was likewise from the perspective of conversion that he recalled the Jews living in Hungary and the proselytizing work of the nuns of Notre Dame de Sion.⁹⁶

Because of its rambling style and excessive length, Hamvas's intervention on ecumenism was reported as a minor fiasco to those in charge of Hungarian church policy, and it was also pointed out that the intervention had met with favorable reaction in the press only as a result of the activity of the journalists traveling with the Hungarian council fathers' entourage. Vid Mihelics in fact prepared an acceptable version of the text for the press.⁹⁷ Despite all this, the independently drafted intervention caused a serious disruption within the Hungarian Catholic press. *Magyar Kurír* could not appear for a week because it did not have instructions about what it could publish of it. *Új Ember* and *Katolikus Szó* meanwhile printed a "cleaned-up" and redacted text.⁹⁸ The problem was caused not primarily by the vagueness of the address, but rather the addendum attached to the lines summarizing the historical evolution of the antagonisms between Protestants and Catholics: "In the recent past, however, their believers have drawn ever closer in spirit to the Catholics. For the common enemy unites all those who believe in God to a united defense."⁹⁹ The peace priest György Vitányi attributed the allusion to the Communist regime's anti-Church atheism to the influence exerted by the emigration on Hamvas. In his interpretation, the bishop explicitly stated the rapprochement between the denominations observed in Hungary was thanks to the fact that the fight against atheism had gathered them into a common

front. The error in this assertion according to Vitányi, was that by his words Hamvas “removed the situation in Hungary from the global battle between atheism and Catholicism and presented it as exceptional.”¹⁰⁰

Finally, also attached to the written version of Endre Hamvas’s interrupted speech was his intervention concerning the issue of mixed marriages, which according to the plans Sándor Kovács should have delivered. Because of his poor health, however, Kovács had been unable to read it. The question of mixed marriages, as one of the special cases of the practice of ecumenism seriously preoccupied the Hungarian council fathers. The document, submitted in writing and almost certainly prepared by József Bánk, warned that from a pastoral point of view it would be necessary to relax the severity of the rules of marriage. Actually, the regulation in effect essentially regarded as heretical those Protestants also who were only born into their religion, and therefore it required a *reversalis* under all circumstances for a proper church wedding. However, many times this prompted betrothed persons belonging to different denominations to cohabitate or contract exclusively civil marriages instead. The submission directed attention to the fact that the demand for the *reversalis* and insistence on the canonical form of marriage caused particular difficulties in Hungary because with regard to the unique situation in the country Rome earlier had recognized as valid marriages deviating from the canonical form, that is, the practice whereby instead of *reversalis* any children to be born followed the religion of their parents according to gender. The Code of Canon Law that went into effect in 1918 had eliminated this privilege, however. For this reason, the Hungarian proposal put forward the recommendation that in the case of mixed marriages the canonical form should not be demanded and possibly even eliminated, or (and the document called this the most practical) the local ordinaries should be authorized to grant individual exemptions from the canonical form where needed.¹⁰¹

During the third session the Council was still planning to issue a separate document on the sacrament of marriage. In his remarks on the schema, which he submitted in writing, József Bánk repeated and expanded on the view articulated in the proposal on mixed marriages by regulating marriage canonically. In light of the increasing number of divorces and the crisis of marriages, this proposal also argued in favor of simplifying the regulation of marriages and resolving disputed issues. Bánk urged first of all the intro-

duction of appropriate marriage preparation and Pre-Cana. In addition, he favored revising ecclesiastical marriage law and emphasized the importance of providing special pastoral care to those living in matrimony.¹⁰²

For the draft text entitled “On the Life and Ministry of Priests,” three Hungarian interventions were prepared. During the third session Bánk (who in the meantime had been consecrated a bishop) rose to speak in regard to the ninth article of the schema on the remuneration of pastors and priests (parochial vicars). In the spirit of *aggiornamento*, based on the teachings of the Gospel and the principles articulated in the Code of Canon Law, he recommended priests receive a “wage worthy of their work” not from the obsolete and unevenly distributed church benefices, but rather the Church should set up pay categories for priests determined according to the various tasks. Beyond this, he proposed that the Church henceforth no longer ask for surplice fees for christenings, weddings or funerals but that these should be covered by the offerings of the faithful instead. And where there was no possibility of abolishing the surplice fees for one reason or another, the pastor should not accept the entire sum but the priest who performed the actual church service should receive a part of it. Finally, Bánk urged pastors and their priests to live in a truly familial atmosphere. And to prevent abuses by superiors, he proposed that not only the pastors be obligated to prepare reports about their priests to the bishop, but the bishop should also ask the priests’ opinions about their pastor’s behavior.¹⁰³

During the Council’s closing session Bánk drafted an additional intervention on the draft text detailing the life of priests. However, when it would have been his turn, he was not in the meeting hall, and thus Ijjas ended up reading his intervention. In the text he first expressed his satisfaction that the schema suitably provided for the social welfare of priests, after which he put forward three concrete recommendations. To enable priests to preach effectively and in a dignified manner, he considered it important to call the priesthood’s attention to adequate preparation. In his opinion, to achieve this centrally planned training materials should be compiled through a council established for this in Rome. As a second point, speaking of priests’ pastoral work, Bánk emphasized the necessity of caring for married people. He pointed out that this applied to those living both in ecclesiastically invalid, irregular and mixed marriages. In the latter case he proposed that the pope permit the normalization of those mixed marriages that were invalid due to lack of

canonical form but had existed for at least five years. He saw a possibility of avoiding the increasingly frequent divorces by thorough marriage preparation, regular family visits, holding annual family spiritual retreats and the revival of the tradition of the marriage pledge (betrothal), as well as indicating in the Code of Canon Law new obstacles to marriages, for instance, corrupted morals, a wife's pregnancy from another man, etc. Finally, as a third point he proposed the conciliar document should unequivocally remind priests that they owed filial obedience to their bishop.¹⁰⁴

Finally, during the fourth session the apostolic administrator of Pécs, József Cserháti, also wanted to comment on the conciliar decree, subsequently entitled *Presbyterorum Ordinis*. However, since his intervention was placed on the agenda at a time when he along with sixty other council fathers was taking part with the permission of the Holy Father and the Council in a pilgrimage to the Holy Land, he ended up submitting his speech to the council secretariat in writing.¹⁰⁵ In his submission Cserháti called the overall text of the draft good but felt, in order to make awareness of the Christlike mission of serving every person appear more emphatically in the schema, it was not sufficient to expound the bases of the priests' apostolic mission in the first chapter. Rather, this central idea should be articulated already in the introduction; otherwise the danger might arise that the schema would offer nothing more than pious spiritual reading. To buttress his recommendation, Cserháti enumerated both subjective and objective arguments. First, he referred to the lesson of church history that every renewal was rooted in the awakening of the apostolic spirit. Next, he pointed out that the apostolate was also the central idea of Vatican II's dual direction (*ad extra* and *ad intra*). Finally, he emphasized that in the modern era all of humanity was beginning to turn into a single large family, and in this unification process the Church as the mystery of unity must serve as an especially effective means of helping people find one another and God. It was the community-forming apostolic spirit that was most able to achieve this, the designated worker of which was the spiritual pastor invested with an authoritative mission.¹⁰⁶

Among the Hungarian council fathers József Bánk and József Cserháti commented not only on the schema on the life and service of the priesthood but also on the draft text dealing with priestly formation. In his written proposal, submitted during the third session Bánk formulated objections of

both form and content. With respect to the schema's form he considered it desirable to have a completely new draft elaborated. And from the point of view of content he made recommendations on the subjects of replenishing the priesthood as well as the practical training of seminary teachers and seminarians. In awakening priestly vocations he emphasized the responsibility both of the family and of priests, and in addition he called important the proper selection and training of seminary teachers so that they might influence seminarians above all through their example. He warned also that young persons who had grown up in modern society must be introduced into spiritual life gradually and the seminarian's secular-oriented internal "infrastructure" first had to be changed into a Christian one. He articulated specific recommendations regarding the structure and content of theological studies and lastly, he urged that each young man graduating from a seminary be mentored for a few more years by a diocesan spiritual director who would guide him into priestly life.¹⁰⁷ In order to remedy the signs of crisis in seminary training, which had been evident for decades, Cserhádi for his part urged the introduction of family-oriented priestly training (*educatio familiaris*). In his written submission, which was signed by 19 Brazilian and 6 Hungarian council fathers, he argued, on the basis of the theological teaching about the Church as "people of God" and "mystical body," that the clergy was called to fulfill the task of Christ among the people of God, and therefore they must follow the chief pastor. However, for this it was not enough to know what this service was in theory; it must also be mastered during training through practice. In addition to the theological argument, citing the results of psychology and pedagogy he also demonstrated that a person's – the seminarian's – individual and social education can be realized to the fullest only when living in a community patterned after the family.¹⁰⁸

Of all the interventions made by the Hungarian council fathers, it was perhaps those dealing with the schema on the role of the Church in the modern world that were most anticipated. One of the editors of Schema 13, Bishop Alfred-Jean-Félix Ancel of Lyons, encouraged the Hungarian bishops to speak, saying, among other things, that with the signing of the agreement between the Vatican and the Hungarian government the other council fathers now expected them to comment on the draft text based on their experiences.¹⁰⁹ The bishop of Lyons also proposed specific criteria for preparing the intervention: taking their special situation as a starting point, the Hungarians

should explain “what it is that is missing from the schema, what it is that has not been taken into consideration, or has been viewed overwhelmingly from a western perspective, regarding the social question, the concept of private property, etc. It would be essential to cite also those social achievements which have taken place, and which have prompted change in the social structure vis-à-vis the West.”¹¹⁰

Encouraged by the French episcopate, and pressed by the staff of the Hungarian embassy, the Hungarian council fathers did indeed set about preparing the intervention. Although the French bishops offered their assistance in composing the final draft, Hamvas entrusted József Cserhádi and József Bánk with elaborating it. Citing the fact that it had to be written in the language of the Council, Brezanóczy later deleted a great many items from the draft intervention, which had been composed by Cserhádi and was worded too much according to the taste of the regime in Hungary. The council fathers accepted the resultant text unanimously, but Bánk persuaded Hamvas to supplement the already accepted draft intervention with the text he composed. Hamvas did honor the request, but at the last moment the thus redacted text suffered still further changes: the final intervention was handed for proofreading to Cardinal Döpfner, who deleted additional sections containing explicitly political content.¹¹¹

In the end it was this text that Hamvas read out on behalf of ten Hungarian council fathers at General Congregation CVII.¹¹² In his introduction he welcomed the Council’s intention, following Pope John XXIII’s initiative, to offer its teaching to the modern world after discussing the Church’s internal affairs. Emphasizing the late pontiff’s merits, he therefore recommended making explicit mention of them in the schema’s introductory section or first chapter. Thereafter, taking the French bishops’ perspective into account, he reminded his listeners that they “must turn with equal interest—without prejudice—towards both East and West, as befits Christ’s eternal Church, which is linked to neither forms of state nor economic systems.”¹¹³

In light of this, the Hungarian address implicitly condemned ideological confrontation when it essentially came out in favor of peaceful co-existence. It not only called praiseworthy the Church’s renunciation of its superfluous privileges, mentioned in the second chapter of the schema but also the willingness it showed, while simultaneously fulfilling its spiritual mission, to cooperate in promoting the earthly welfare of all of humanity. Hamvas

approved of the Church's aspirations to promote freedom everywhere, its respect of the opinions of persons professing differing ideologies, and its desire to lead them to God not through force but rather the exemplary life of Christians as the basis for this cooperation. He mentioned the partial agreement concluded between the Holy See and the Hungarian People's Republic as a promising example of fruitful cooperation between believers and non-believers. This, he asserted, had improved the situation of the Hungarian Church to a significant degree. He therefore considered it necessary to express thanks to Pope Paul VI on behalf of the entire Hungarian Church in the presence of the council fathers for having signed the document.

Although the Hungarian council fathers, at Cardinal Döpfner's intercession, did not voice in the council hall their specific recommendation to follow the positive experiences of the unique Hungarian historical, social and economic situation in order to make more tangible the novel attitude and activity urged in the introduction to the schema's third chapter, the relevant paragraph was retained in the submitted written version of the intervention.¹¹⁴ Finally, Hamvas added two observations to Chapter IV: when solving the urgent problems raised he considered the fundamental principles of the encyclical *Pacem in Terris* as something to be followed; and in connection with the point discussing the dignity of the human being he considered the right to the free choice of religion to be of primary importance.

Having called Schema 13 suitable for general debate during the third session, the Hungarian council fathers, during the fourth session they again explained their position on the text. According to plans, once again Endre Hamvas would have commented on the general debate of the revised draft, but after the general debate was declared closed because of the large number of interventions, on September 22, the Hungarian delegates regarded the text they had prepared as irrelevant. Nevertheless the next day the moderators—presumably at Cardinal Döpfner's urging—did end up asking Hamvas to comment. He was unable to deliver his speech, however, because none of the Hungarian bishops had the text with them. Thus, the intervention—two versions similar in content but worded differently—was ultimately attached in written form to the Council's protocols.¹¹⁵

In the intervention, elaborated along the basic ideas laid out by József Cserhádi, József Bánk, and József Ijjas, Hamvas, speaking on behalf of all the Hungarian council fathers, once again pointed out the significance of

Schema 13. At the same time, he voiced his pleasure that it approached the solution to the arising problems in the spirit of Pope John XXIII. After these words of introduction, which in many respects repeated the address given at the third session, he made three points. First and foremost he warned that the teaching articulated in the conciliar document must not remain a dead letter but must truly permeate pastoral work. He emphasized furthermore that they must act even “if our age and our world, to which we turn ready to serve, does not properly reciprocate our love and effort.”¹¹⁶ Next, he pointed out that a distinction must be made between “basic, universally inalienable and necessary church goods” and incidental and apparent goods and, instead of protecting ephemeral goods, the Church should strive to carry out its mission. To illustrate these points, he cited the Hungarian example:

We live under an entirely new system, therefore we must also travel new paths. An entire array of new questions has arisen which we must solve in such a way that we also serve the good of our Church. We admit that we do not miss all that we have sacrificed materially to become part of society. The purpose and constant thrust of our effort had been to ensure our church life and freedom to act, and indeed, increase these according to our possibilities. In Hungary, for example, on our own responsibility we collaborated in helping to solve a few matters urgent for us. [...] We also know that much patience, work and mutual trust will still be needed for the final settlement. It is our conviction that the World Church itself and mainly our Council will give us, too, great momentum by standing on the ground of dialogue, and in pursuit of our schema it will establish an appropriate spiritual climate.¹¹⁷

Finally, the intervention disapproved of intensifying the struggle between the differing ideologies, urging instead dialogue and peaceful coexistence.

The draft text which entered the Council's protocols likewise under Hamvas' name also discussed similar topics. In his intervention he praised the Church for looking upon itself in this schema not according to dogmatic criteria but by speaking of the fulfillment of its mission in the present and future world. Furthermore, he approved of the Council designating freedom as the basic organizing principle of the relationship between social and

political life and the Church. It was in light of this that the framework of peaceful co-existence between the socialist regimes and the Church must be shaped. Hamvas emphasized that the goods not necessary for life must be relinquished. With this greater trust in the Church could be awakened. In addition to setting out the teaching of the faith in resolute terms, he reiterated the warning that this not lead to an intensification of the ideological struggle. Finally, he pointed out that the intention to open up the Church, as presented in the schema, presupposed reciprocity on the part of the world as well. At the same time, he voiced the hope that the three secretariats established during the Council would contribute to promoting dialogue to a significant degree.¹¹⁸

Finally, on behalf of the Hungarian council fathers Pál Brezanóczy commented on Schema 13 in connection with one further question of detail. In his address, after welcoming the definition of peace provided in the fourth chapter of the draft, according to which peace was dynamically, organically linked with the other factors of human life, and of a universal character, he submitted a recommendation for establishing a central ecclesiastical peace organization. This in fact would effectively promote the Church's ability to act in the interest of peace in a suitable manner and with authority throughout the entire world. At the same time, the establishment of such a peace organization not only would create a possibility for cooperation with other peace movements but would offer the Holy See a constant opportunity to continuously have its voice heard in the UN as well. Brezanóczy's other recommendation relating to the schema championed a solemn and unambiguous condemnation (*damnatio* [!]) of total and atomic war. In his opinion such a resolution, besides conforming to the rightful expectations of humanity, directly followed not least from the fifth commandment and would reinforce the correct and unitary world opinion that was emerging on the issue.¹¹⁹

The content of the Hungarian council interventions shows a certain evolution. Like the Hungarian *vota* composed during the Council's preparatory phase, some of these reflected the canonical-casuistic church outlook of earlier centuries while asking for flexibility or relaxations in several areas out of pastoral considerations. The texts on marriage law and mixed marriages typify this outlook particularly well. However, in the interventions drafted during the second half of the Council—above all in connection with the

schema discussing the relationship between Church and the modern world—the impact of the council majority’s position becomes increasingly discernible. This in turn indicates that—not least as a result of the appointment of the new chief pastors—the Hungarian episcopate’s conservative understanding of the Church underwent a partial change in the wake of the Council’s teaching.

After surveying the content and in part the known origin story of the interventions, we may attempt to distinguish in broad lines on the one hand those texts which were drafted under the impact of external expectations, perhaps expressly to transmit an external message and on the other hand those which unequivocally reflect the Hungarian council fathers’ sphere of interest. This analysis is particularly justified since—as we saw—prior to each session the Hungarian state formulated those views it expected the chief pastors to represent while in Rome.

As a general principle, it may be stated that the interventions that the Hungarian council fathers may have conceived on their own initiative fall into three categories: those that the state viewed as irrelevant because of their apolitical nature; furthermore those that undoubtedly can be traced back to the individual area of interest of one council father or another; and finally those submissions whose authors according to the available sources attempted to bypass any kind of control. To the first category belong almost certainly the texts dealing with the liturgy, the inner life of the Church, the life and service of the priesthood or priestly education. Into the second category may be grouped those interventions dealing with mixed marriages and marriage law; József Bánk, a noted expert on ecclesiastical marriage law, played a primary role in composing each of these. To the third category belongs first of all Endre Hamvas’s speech about the schema on ecumenism: apart from the origin story of the intervention (namely, instead of the text drafted by the attendants the bishop of Csanád read a speech he wrote himself), this is indicated primarily by the fact that that sentence objected to by the Hungarian authorities (explaining the improvement in cooperation between Protestants and Catholics by the existence of a common ideological enemy) was retained in the text. But this category also includes the two submissions concerning the debate on the pastoral duties of bishops. The sources attest to the fact that these two interventions completely evaded the notice of the state authorities. Their existence was not even mentioned

in the account of the events of the second session delivered to the Bench of Bishops.¹²⁰

The fact that the texts were created to meet external expectations is clearly visible only in the speeches addressing Schema 13. In fact, the content of these was dictated in part externally. For it is obvious that not only the French bishops were urging the Hungarian council fathers to address the draft text “The Church in the Modern World.” Understandably, the leaders of Hungarian church policy articulated similar expectations as well. At the same time, the *Redaktionsgeschichte* of the intervention delivered by Hamvas during the third session faithfully reflects the way in which the Hungarian council fathers sought to meet the state’s requirements without completely becoming the regime’s mouthpiece. However, even with Döpfner’s modifications and Brezanóczy’s corrections the attempt did not fully succeed. The apostolic administrator of Eger himself characterized the corrected text by saying that “there is a lot of things included in here only because Mr. Földes wanted it so.”¹²¹ The demands of the Hungarian government were reflected even more explicitly in the interventions drafted for the fourth session. Cardinal Döpfner classified Hamvas’s submission as nothing less than a “homework assignment.”¹²² In saying this he was not far from the truth, since the Hungarian bishops attending the fourth session were assigned the task, among others, of presenting Hungary’s economic and social achievements through positive speeches as well as championing the cause of progress and peace.¹²³ It was the latter requirement that Brezanóczy’s speech in favor of peace and condemning total war was meant to satisfy; the state authorities declared its recommendation relating to the set-up of a central ecclesiastical peace organ to be of great significance.¹²⁴ In light of the draft interventions available to us, nevertheless we may conclude that the Hungarian council fathers even while composing these speeches, which (also) served explicitly state demands, attempted to refine the wording and omitted numerous excessively “loyal-sounding” details from the final version.¹²⁵

3.3. NEGOTIATIONS WITH THE HOLY SEE

3.3.1. *Negotiating sides*

In addition to council activity in the strict sense of the word (indeed, on more than one occasion instead of it), the Hungarian bishops used their stay in Rome to discuss the Church's affairs in Hungary. In order to suitably advocate the Hungarian chief pastors' position, it was first of all necessary to win the trust of the Vatican negotiating partners. Achieving this, however, was no simple matter, for it was necessary to dispel the mistrust that stemmed from the fact that the Holy See from the outset regarded the Hungarian delegation as a "partly government delegation,"¹²⁶ while at the same time the government's expectations also had to be met.

One possible behavioral strategy (and one, that proved quite practical, as it later turned out) was worked out by Miklós Beresztóczy. In the document drafted—at state suggestion—during the first session, the leading peace priest called attention to the following essential points:

Our bishops in Rome, too, should speak the same language as they do here at home. They should not think that once outside our borders their role will be more interesting, or their conduct in Rome more acceptable, if they strive to explain away their conduct here or make it understood with complaints beyond the existing problems. [...] It is not desirable to cover up the problems of church life in Hungary, but it would be a bold undertaking to offer hasty or exaggerated information which does not conform to reality and favor Western thinking. [...] Should a conflict arise between certain elements of socialist social thinking and the conduct expected of them abroad, they should not make rash commitments, but instead strive to clarify the issue by taking a non-committal stance to gain time. On important questions this will also make it possible to consult with experts at home through the help of our minister to Rome. [...] Let our bishops immediately draft memoranda about their statements and conversations, and give statements over the radio and to newspapers only in writing, so that with the help of these they are able to verify the true content of their words against any possible subsequent false quotes.¹²⁷

The Holy See could not select its Hungarian negotiating partners. Nevertheless, the Vatican suspected that those charged with special state (-security) tasks were to be found primarily among the members of the entourage and therefore did not negotiate with them. Only in a few exceptional cases did they attempt to obtain information on some specific question from one attendant or another, such as György Kovács, rector of the seminary in Győr, who was interviewed about the training of seminarians at the Sacred Congregation of Seminaries.¹²⁸

Defending and preserving their credibility and prestige before the Holy See likewise represented a constant task for the bishops. This was so for both those who had been serving as bishops for a long time and those newly appointed as a result of the 1964 partial agreement. Nevertheless, the new bishops' credibility was called into question not primarily in connection with their (excessive) political loyalty to the Hungarian regime (though Casaroli held Brezanóczy responsible for his trip to Helsinki during the fourth session and the spring circular letter of the Hungarian Bench of Bishops).¹²⁹ The difficulties of the canonical examination preceding the episcopal appointment are indicated by the fact that the new chief pastors most often had to clear themselves of some accusation concerning their character and moral irreproachability.¹³⁰

Despite the reservations, the Vatican dicasteries negotiated with all the bishops arriving for the Council without exception. During the first session the content of these discussions in any case rarely moved beyond asking for accounts of the situation of the various dioceses or general religious conditions in Hungary. The example of Sándor Kovács showed also that the Holy See tried through its own means to verify the sincerity and credibility of the information obtained from the bishops. After the commencement of direct negotiations between the Vatican and the Hungarian government, the situation changed only in that now the Vatican tried to use the Hungarian bishops not only as sources of information, but also as advisors with local and situational knowledge.

Naturally, the Holy See wished to discuss the most significant questions relating to church policy with the person most competent to do so, the leader of the Hungarian Church. However, given the historical situation, it was by no means easy to determine who ranked as the actual head of the Hungarian Church, that is, who possessed the appropriate competence, opportunity and

ability to negotiate. *De jure* Cardinal Mindszenty was the head of the Hungarian Church. From the spring of 1963 on the Holy See duly held talks with him as far as opportunities allowed. Nevertheless, the chief pastor, living in isolation inside the American embassy building, could exert little influence on the everyday life of the Hungarian Church. For this reason the Holy See—though it regularly asked Mindszenty’s opinion also—increasingly came to regard the man leading the Hungarian Church in fact, Endre Hamvas as a negotiating partner. While Mindszenty experienced this as an unjust exclusion and did everything to have his own leading role recognized, Hamvas was flattered to be regarded as the leader of the Hungarian Church.¹³¹ His desire to retain the leading role and hope of a possible appointment as a cardinal at the same time represented important motivations for him to press for a resolution to Cardinal Mindszenty’s case conforming to the state’s interests.¹³²

During the first session Hamvas indisputably succeeded in making the Vatican forget the prejudices concerning his conduct in the 1950s.¹³³ There is much evidence to show that the merits earned by the bishop of Csanád in preparing the direct Vatican–Hungarian negotiations throughout 1962 and 1963 were likewise viewed with admiration. The substitute of the secretary of state, Dell’Acqua, allegedly already after the first session had declared that the Holy See was “extremely satisfied” with Hamvas’s negotiations with the authorities in Budapest, and confidence in him had grown because both sides (the Hungarian state and the Catholic Church) were respecting the agreements concluded by him to the letter.¹³⁴ Beginning with the second session, however, the prestige of the president of the Bench of Bishops began to fade in the eyes of the Holy See. Even though his proposals continued to be considered and evaluated, his increasingly obvious forgetfulness and senility led the Vatican to assume that the state authorities were exploiting his advanced age and guiding his actions.¹³⁵ All this does not mean that his loyalty to the Church was called into question, but because of his lack of sufficient resolve stemming from his temperament and age he was increasingly considered unsuited for occupying leading positions of responsibility. Under these circumstances his appointment as archbishop of Kalocsa was likewise primarily the result of political compromise.¹³⁶

After his advanced age and illness rendered Hamvas no longer able to exploit the circumstances and situations (though he continued to be

regarded as the leader of the Hungarian Church and was not excluded from the management of affairs), the Holy See increasingly came to view Brezanóczy as a genuine partner during the continuation of the negotiations.¹³⁷ Despite the initial reservations about him, his intelligence and suitability made a positive impression. The Franciscan Superior Augustin Sépinski went so far as to state of the Hungarian chief pastors that “there is one talented person among them—the administrator of Eger—but he’s not a bishop.”¹³⁸

What undoubtedly also must have played a role in Brezanóczy’s improved image was the Holy See’s perception that on more than one occasion it was the apostolic administrator of Eger, blessed with good negotiating ability, proper language skills and readiness to take the initiative when needed, who was the actual spokesman of the bishops in Rome. Nevertheless, negotiating ability did not count as the only criterion in the eyes of the Holy See. Even though the nimble apostolic administrator of Eger may have seemed in many respects better suited to represent the cause of the Hungarian Church before the state than the aging, hesitant Hamvas, despite the hopes of the Hungarian authorities the Holy See in the end would never recognize Brezanóczy as the leader of the Hungarian Church. The excessively cordial ties which the apostolic administrator of Eger nurtured with the state authorities gave the Holy See pause. Although they could not assess the precise nature of this relationship (Casaroli’s memorandum in any case testifies that the Holy See had no information about his activities as an agent) they found his overly “cunning” behavior (*furbizia*) dangerous. Beyond the above, the appointment of the new bishops also helped to make Brezanóczy no longer an indispensable factor on every issue.¹³⁹

The discussions between the Hungarian bishops and the Holy See took place primarily at the Vatican Secretariat of State. At first Dell’Acqua and Samorè still negotiated for the Vatican. However, starting from the very end of November 1962, only Casaroli met with the bishops privately, and from this time on Secretary of State Cicognani, Substitute Dell’Acqua and Samorè received the Hungarian council fathers exclusively at joint audiences. The group meetings as a rule were courtesy visits or served the purpose of briefing the Hungarian chief pastors at the Secretariat of State at the end of the council sessions on the position emerging from the negotiations.

The papal audiences served as special opportunities for communication between the Hungarian bishops and the Holy See. During the first session

Pope John XXIII twice received the Hungarian council fathers, and during the subsequent sessions Pope Paul VI also granted them audiences. The papal audiences by their very nature were not primarily occasions for negotiation. Nevertheless, the audiences not only allowed the pope to state his brief evaluation of the situation of the Hungarian Church or encourage the bishops to continue to stand their ground in person, but also provided the Hungarian chief pastors an opportunity to react to what was said. And these replies influenced the pope's views regarding the situation of the Hungarian Church and, indirectly, the course of the substantive negotiations.

It must have impacted the development of the Holy See's policy, for instance, that during the audience of November 25, 1962 the Hungarian chief pastors in the presence of Pope John XXIII refuted a number of erroneous or inaccurate reports concerning the situation of the Hungarian Church.¹⁴⁰ Later, during the fourth session Bishop Miklós Dudás of Hajdúdorog was able to convey to Pope Paul VI in veiled terms the opinions of the chief pastors held as "reactionary" by the government in Budapest. When the pope inquired about Norbert Legányi, who had attended the third session but was not allowed to travel to the fourth, in the awkward silence the Greek Catholic bishop in a loud voice also pointed out the absence of the Cistercian abbot of Zirc—and by doing so the oppressed situation of the Hungarian Church, and the prohibition of the religious orders' activity.¹⁴¹

3.3.2. Major subjects of negotiation

After a decade and a half of isolation, the Second Vatican Council created once more an opportunity for the Holy See to enter into direct contact with the Hungarian bishops. Logically, the Vatican wished to utilize the prelates traveling to attend Vatican II to gain a fuller understanding, while the Hungarian government aimed to make its interests known. Below an attempt will be made to describe how the Hungarian chief pastors tried to play an intermediary role between the two sides, as well as how they attempted to represent the Church's interests without also calling into question the compromises they had previously made.

To compensate for the cancelled *ad limina* visits, the Holy See asked the chief pastors allowed to attend the Council (and in certain cases, the

attendants¹⁴²) first and foremost for general reports on their dioceses. When filling out the questionnaire, which contained some 100 questions, the Hungarian bishops followed differing strategies. Of the three chief pastors attending the first session, Sándor Kovács, for example, gave only very concise, simple answers to the questions. Endre Hamvas, by contrast, provided an exhaustive account. A unique solution, however, was chosen by Pál Brezanóczy. In order to avoid having to paint a negative picture of the state of the diocese, and to be able to convey his position to the Holy See in a sufficiently nuanced and effective manner, he omitted statistical data from his responses. He intentionally gave such terse replies to the other questions as well, so that these could be interpreted only in a personal encounter.¹⁴³

Apart from the *ad limina* accounts, examining primarily the internal situation of the Church, during the first session the Holy See wanted to obtain a wide-ranging understanding of the relationship between the state and the Church, as well as the Church's actual freedom. Although the Hungarian bishops did not deny that in numerous areas there were still difficulties, they nevertheless attempted to place the emphasis on the positives. An important means of forming a more favorable picture was first and foremost refuting erroneous or exaggerated information. An outstanding example of this is how Hamvas and Brezanóczy corrected the information which Pope John XXIII inquired about during the November 25, 1962 audience based on the document prepared by the Secretariat of State. The Hungarian chief pastors emphasized that neither Imre Szabó nor Mihály Endrey could be regarded as impeded since both were allowed to confirm, while pointing out in the cases of Gellért Belon and József Winkler that they were only appointed, but not consecrated, bishops.¹⁴⁴ Other sources also confirm that the Hungarian bishops used their conversation partners' ignorance to make them question their views about the persecution of the Hungarian Church as well. Endre Hamvas, for example, though seeking to avoid unnecessary disputes, whenever someone expressed his sympathies about the situation of the Hungarian Church, never failed to "demonstrate factually" its freedom to operate.¹⁴⁵

They supported the assertion that the Hungarian Church was basically free to operate in the first place by citing favorable indicators of religious life and the existence of the infrastructure needed for the Church's activity (seminaries, press, nursing homes). An eloquent example of the one-sided (and therefore misleading) emphasis on the positives is Sándor Kovács's presentation of a

photo album, containing pictures of his most recent confirmation tour, to the pope. The gift can be seen as deliberate, and not only because Kovács, pointing out the crowds of believers in the photos to Angelo Dell'Acqua, who was enlisted to deliver the album, observed that this was the best proof of the Church's actual status.¹⁴⁶ The significance of the photo album, presenting the lavish confirmation tour, increased because, on May 1, 1962, the Holy See, with regard to the "extraordinary Hungarian situation," had issued a decree authorizing non-episcopal ordinaries and vicars also to administer the sacrament of confirmation.¹⁴⁷

All this does not mean that the Hungarian chief pastors did not acknowledge that the Hungarian Church had difficulties. However, under the terms of the recommendation penned by Beresztóczy, quoted above, they strove not to exaggerate the existing problems. It is known from József Száll's report, for example, that during his visit at the Vatican Secretariat of State Endre Hamvas sought as much as possible to avoid the question of the Hungarian Church's problems. He showed a willingness mostly to speak about abuses witnessed in the area of religious education, "where a few years earlier in certain counties educators convinced parents first of all 'with forcible arguments.'"¹⁴⁸ Yet based on the account of the Hungarian minister to Rome one by no means must reach the conclusion that during his negotiations at the Vatican Hamvas did not really acknowledge other difficulties as well. The document's careful wording, however, accurately reflects the loyal style with which the bishop of Csanád attempted to blunt the edge of these problems.

A unique source relating to the presentation at the Vatican of the Hungarian Church's difficulties is the report drafted by Prelate Josip Žabkar, who worked in the Secretariat of State, about his private conversation with Pál Brezanóczy, already quoted several times.¹⁴⁹ The memorandum, which was forwarded to Pope John XXIII as well, is particularly valuable because at present this is virtually the sole instance where it is possible to reconstruct exactly what was said at an important meeting without relying solely on agent reports. The meeting of the former schoolmates at Innsbruck after all was not simply a conversation between friends: Brezanóczy was aware that Žabkar would write a report of what was said to the pope, with whom he had worked together in Paris.¹⁵⁰

The memorandum drafted by the Vatican diplomat clearly attests to the way in which Brezanóczy applied in practice those principles which Miklós Beresztóczy had formulated at the request of the State Office for Church Affairs to help the council fathers brief the Holy See and which somehow attempted to reconcile the criteria of loyalty to the Church and loyalty to the state.¹⁵¹ The apostolic administrator of Eger did not deny the difficulties faced by the Hungarian Church: he spoke of the high degree of control over the life of the Church and the major appointments, the activity of the commissioners for church affairs, the clergy's financial dependence on the state, the activity of certain priests as agents, and about how, although at present the religious life of the faithful was adequate, in the long term the loss of youth threatened the Church. The picture sketched by him was by no means completely negative, however. Through small examples he illustrated how in recent times a slow but gradual improvement could be witnessed. As examples he mentioned that the commissioners of the ÁEH were no longer conducting their work out of the episcopal residences, that the government, perhaps under pressure from Moscow, had in the recent past dropped György Marosán, who was known for his hostility to the Church, and lastly, above all the fact that a few of them had been allowed to attend the Second Vatican Council.

The picture sketched by Brezanóczy was undoubtedly nuanced, though behind the positive and negative examples as well as the criteria mentioned an unmistakable tendentiousness can be detected. It is questionable whether the Vatican realized that Brezanóczy's goal (one he openly admitted in other documents) was precisely to persuade the Holy See to conduct a certain *Realpolitik*, that is, to establish direct relations with the Hungarian government, since it was possible to negotiate realistically with Communist leaders also.¹⁵² As was described above, this was precisely one of the primary tasks Brezanóczy received from the Hungarian authorities. However, all this does not rule out the possibility that Brezanóczy undertook this assignment (and fulfilled it so successfully) because, to his mind by doing so he was also best serving the interests of the Hungarian Church. In any event, the convincing argumentation in the Žabkar memorandum explicitly seems to support this. In light of the declaration made by Bishop József Ijjas during the fourth session, it may also be added that by arguing in favor of *Realpolitik* the Hungarian bishops were simultaneously defending their own—loyal—

conduct. According to Ijjas “one must understand that we live under that system, and we must not intensify the situation.”¹⁵³

Unlike Brezanóczy, Hamvas at first did not support the plan to establish direct Vatican–Hungarian negotiations or send a Vatican envoy (apostolic visitor) to Hungary. This is indicated, at least, by the fact that he officially handed over the Holy See’s *nota verbale* to the State Office for Church Affairs only after a considerable delay, more than a month later, at the express urging of Imre Miklós.¹⁵⁴ The reason for Hamvas’s procrastination is not clear. The fact that at first he “did not want to recall” the *nota verbale* may indicate that he feared it would be mainly the Hungarian state that would benefit from the negotiations. At the same time, based on other documents we may presume that his fear that potential direct negotiations might lead to a diminishment of his personal role, and perhaps even cause the actual leadership of the Hungarian Church to slip from his grasp, played at least a partial role in his procrastination.¹⁵⁵ In any event, after having become convinced that the Holy See would not question his leading role even after the negotiations, and that the negotiations served the Church’s interests, Hamvas himself explicitly urged the establishment of direct ties between the Holy See and Hungary.¹⁵⁶

Subsequently, the question of the situation of the Hungarian Church would become primarily the chief topic of the bilateral negotiations. The Hungarian chief pastors attending the coronation ceremony of Paul VI as well as the subsequent council sessions were by now not expressly the Holy See’s negotiating partners but rather its advisors. Nevertheless, two Hungarian prelates, Endre Hamvas and Pál Brezanóczy, played key roles in determining the items on the agenda for the Vatican–Hungarian negotiations. It was, in fact, the subjects debated during the discussion with Casaroli on April 29, 1963 in Vienna, as well as the list of the Church’s grievances secretly presented by Hamvas that formed the bases of the agenda items raised by the Vatican delegate.¹⁵⁷

In the course of the bilateral negotiations the Holy See relied on the Hungarian chief pastors first and foremost to help identify episcopal candidates worthy of consideration. The issue of filling the episcopal sees had been raised already during the first session, at this time, however, Hamvas was still briefing the Secretariat of State only about the difficulties relating to the appointments and the possibilities offered by the legal background

instead.¹⁵⁸ Regarding personnel matters the leaders of Hungarian church policy would have considered it most convenient if the Holy See solved the issue of replenishing the hierarchy by making bishops out of the apostolic administrators and vicars capitular in office.¹⁵⁹ This automatic solution did not suit the Holy See. Although it raised no objections in principle against making the apostolic administrators appointed by the Vatican bishops, the Secretariat of State resolutely rejected the notion of appointing the acting vicars; only the vicar operating in Szeged, Elemér Merksz, was seen as an exception to this.¹⁶⁰ Instead, Secretary of State Cicognani pressed the Hungarian council fathers to name new candidates, encouraging them not to fear making even apparently bold proposals either, since the Holy See would weigh them anyway.¹⁶¹ Samorè later signaled also in the interest of putting forward suitable candidates the bishops could confer with the state as well.¹⁶²

The Hungarian chief pastors attempted to find suitable candidates while taking into account the above demands of the government and the Holy See. During talks with Casaroli at the Council's second session Sándor Kovács named Pál Brezanóczy and József Cserháti as possible candidates; auxiliary Bishop Vince Kovács of Vác for his part recommended Mihály Rajz, pastor of Mátyásföld, and, at the urging of the impeded Bishop József Pétery, Kálmán Lancz, a theology professor from Eger.¹⁶³ Apart from them, Endre Hamvas, as president of the Bench of Bishops, made recommendations on several viable persons as bishops. Casaroli also supplemented the list Hamvas submitted in writing with names suggested by the other Hungarian council fathers. Thus, in December 1963 the list of candidates included, in addition to all of the functioning apostolic administrators, the following persons: the vicar capitular of Pécs, József Cserháti; the rector of the seminary in Győr, György Kovács; József Winkler; the archabbot of Pannonhalma, Norbert Legányi; a professor at the Theological Academy, József Bánk; a professor at the Theological Academy, Ferenc Gál; pastor of Vár, János Tóth; the abbot of Jánoshalma, József Udvardy; the pastor of Mátyásföld, Mihály Rajz; the pastor of Hőgyész, László Gálos; seminary rector János Maksa; and the pastor of Baja, József Ijjas; as well as episcopal vicar István Rojkovics and academy professor Imre Timkó for the Greek Catholic diocese. Based on the available sources, the compilation for some reason did not include Kálmán Lancz; nor did it include Kálmán Péntek, pastor of Komárom County, or Elek Rákosi, diocesan chancellor of Győr, both of whom had been recommended to Prelate

József Zágon for the episcopal see of Győr by agent “Győri.”¹⁶⁴ Beyond the above list of names, Zágon also put forward Lajos Kada, a member of the Vatican diplomatic service, and János Lányi, canon of Győr. Even though Casaroli voiced his concern that the list of candidates did not include a sufficient number of names to ensure that an agreement on suitable persons could be reached with the state, as far as is known no further changes were made to the list until the partial agreement of 1964.¹⁶⁵ From the above names in the spring of 1964 Casaroli compiled his specific personnel recommendations for filling each episcopal see.¹⁶⁶

In the course of compiling the list of candidates the Hungarian chief pastors obviously attempted to put forward figures who, while acceptable to the state, at the same time would not cause objections to be raised from an ecclesiastical standpoint either. Based on the available sources it may be presumed that for the sake of guaranteeing the former criterion Hamvas conferred with the State Office for Church Affairs on some level. This much is indicated at least by the observation that, although the recommendations he submitted during the second session differed to a certain extent from the ÁEH's criteria, at the same time he put forward names for the most part acceptable to the state as well.¹⁶⁷ From an ecclesiastical standpoint Breznóczy did not consider it desirable to propose candidates marked by “fierce courage” either, since the government had at its disposal the means to easily break them. Rather, the apostolic administrator of Eger regarded the kind of “silent courage” capable of resistance in the truly long run to be indispensable in a bishop.¹⁶⁸ Finally, the fact that the overwhelming majority of the persons put forward had completed, or at least pursued, studies in Rome, Innsbruck, or possibly at the Hungarian seminary in Vienna, the Collegium Pazmanianum, explicitly indicated the desire to keep the Holy See's interests in view.¹⁶⁹ Finally, nor can it be ignored that in many instances the chief pastors making the recommendations themselves aspired to be appointed archbishop or bishop. Naturally, they could not recommend themselves, though they did attempt through their conduct in Rome to pave the way for their own plans at the Holy See. Nevertheless, personal ambitions in and of themselves would not have been sufficient to attain their goals. In the final analysis it was only through compromise that they earned the desired positions. For example, it is specifically known that when the Secretariat of State decided to appoint Hamvas archbishop of Kalocsa and

Brezanóczy titular bishop, its assessment that rejecting the two candidates would also have foiled subsequent appointments weighed heavily.¹⁷⁰

Apart from the lists of candidates the Holy See also relied to a great extent on the Hungarian council fathers in carrying out the canonical examination of the candidates. The Holy See in fact was rarely presented with an opportunity to conduct this vetting process on site. For example, in the spring of 1964 Casaroli utilized his talks in Budapest to obtain information on the candidates from as many persons as possible.¹⁷¹ It is also known that while in Budapest the Vatican envoy also asked Mindszenty's opinion of the candidates. In the decision-making process the prince-primate's observations and objections were also taken into account. Aside from his specific opinions about the candidates, in more than one instance from Mindszenty's comments one can discern his thinking that filling the vacant episcopal sees was not the most pressing task.¹⁷²

Nevertheless, Casaroli's memoranda attest to the fact that, in addition to the aforementioned possibilities, it was the information supplied by the council fathers that played the primary role. This became clear first and foremost when during the negotiations between June 14 and 21, 1965 Casaroli indicated to the Hungarian side that later on the Holy See would wish to make the canonical examination of the individual candidates more thorough, because the opportunities available during the Council would henceforth no longer exist.¹⁷³ Nevertheless, due to the confidential nature of the examination, all that is obvious from the document is the fact that the council sessions were of outstanding importance in carrying out the *processus informativus*. The names of the persons providing the data are not revealed, however, and from the sources only Endre Hamvas's activity in this area can be documented. During the second session Casaroli handed Hamvas the combined list of candidates, asking him to expound his opinions of the persons who could be considered.¹⁷⁴ Hamvas duly prepared the detailed descriptions and forwarded them to the Secretariat of State while making certain that they—because of the obligation to secrecy—did not wind up in the wrong hands. It is almost certainly connected to the confidential nature of providing information that the Holy See accepted Hamvas's untyped reports in manuscript as well.¹⁷⁵

Although with the 1964 partial agreement they succeeded in placing chief pastors acceptable to the Vatican in a few places, further vacancies would have

to be reckoned with in the near future. The Holy See was preoccupied first of all by the problem of finding successors to the aged Kálmán Papp, Vince Kovács, and Endre Hamvas, and with the death of Bertalan Badalik a permanent solution had to be found for governing the Diocese of Veszprém as well.¹⁷⁶ Thus, during the last two council sessions too the Holy See enlisted the Hungarian council fathers to research additional bishop candidates, as well as carry out the canonical examination of the proposed persons. However, during the negotiations, few new names came up (with the possible exception of Archdeacon Béla Sulyok¹⁷⁷), and instead, different combinations were discussed on the basis of the existing names. Bánk's name was mentioned as the legal successor to Győr. József Cserhádi and József Ijjas came up in the event that the archiepiscopal see of Kalocsa fell vacant. For the time being no long-term decision was reached concerning the dioceses of Vác and Veszprém. The only change that occurred was that Vince Kovács and Sándor Klempa were also granted full rights to govern their dioceses.¹⁷⁸ From the Holy See's standpoint, the succession of the similarly aged Lajos Shvoy was settled on paper, since Kisberk had been appointed auxiliary bishop at the time so that he would assume the governance of the diocese in the event of a vacancy. The State Office for Church Affairs in any case anticipated that Rome would not press for Kisberk's appointment, since originally he had not been viewed as a really suitable bishop either, nor did he enjoy sufficient prestige among the clergy. Moreover, his selection would not have substantially improved relations with the state.¹⁷⁹ Although new names still cropped up after the Council, the Hungarian negotiators rejected the appointment of each of these persons as bishop for various reasons.¹⁸⁰

Nevertheless, on the matter of episcopal nominations, the Hungarian chief pastors traveling to the Council provided the Holy See with indispensable assistance. Under the given circumstances (i.e., the distance and the impenetrability of the Iron Curtain), it was mostly the bishops with local knowledge who had a chance to put forward persons who were both of undoubted loyalty to the Church and not objectionable to the state either. For the earlier appointments the emigration had still been able to oversee this function, however, information that had still been regarded as fresh in the early 1950s had become obsolete by the mid-1960s.¹⁸¹

At the same time, having the episcopal candidates first pass through the filter of the loyal episcopate was of greater advantage to the state as well. This

not only guaranteed that an expressly hostile person would not wind up on the list but also provided the state an opportunity to “sneak in” its own candidates through planted ecclesiastics and to prepare arguments concerning candidates put forward by the Holy See in advance.¹⁸² One trace of this preparation process are the memoranda evaluating several functioning Hungarian chief pastors prepared by the State Office for Church Affairs in the spring of 1964.¹⁸³

Among the items on agenda for the Vatican–Hungarian negotiations, it was in regard to the activity of the peace priest movement, and especially the retraction of the punishment of the peace priests excommunicated by name for their political role, that a serious task fell to the Hungarian council fathers. While the Holy See would have liked to learn in more precise detail the actual significance of the peace priest movement and its impact on church discipline, the Hungarian government expressly entrusted the Hungarian bishops with the task of pressing for a settlement of the excommunicated priests’ status. In keeping with the state’s mandate, Endre Hamvas had raised the issue of the excommunicated priests in the presence of Samorè and the pope already during the first session. However, the fact that the Holy See was open to settling the issue did not satisfy the Hungarian authorities.¹⁸⁴ After repeated state pressure, on April 26, 1963 Hamvas at last wrote a letter to John XXIII asking the Holy Father to lift the excommunication of Miklós Beresztóczy, Richárd Horváth and János Máté, as well as the disciplinary measures against those priests who had been declared unworthy of holding ecclesiastical positions. The bishop of Csanád justified his request in part by claiming that granting the clemency would improve relations between Church and state, but also in part by arguing that “sincerely keeping the good of the Church in view, these priests under the new circumstances sought new paths to find a suitable way of negotiating with the state while preserving the integrity of the Church’s rights and the salvation of souls. However, many adduced suspicious explanations for the effort of these men, and until now the bishops have not had an opportunity to inform the Holy See about this matter fully.”¹⁸⁵

Hamvas handed Casaroli the letter to the pope during their discussion on April 29, 1963 in Vienna. Later, after Paul VI’s election he again sent a copy of the letter to the Holy See’s envoy, asking the latter to give the matter his attention.¹⁸⁶ Casaroli acknowledged receipt of Hamvas’s letter on September 17 and indicated that the Council’s second session might offer a favorable

opportunity for a more profound discussion of the matter.¹⁸⁷ During their subsequent personal meetings Casaroli ultimately informed Hamvas that the Secretariat of State was seriously examining the case of the excommunicated priests. At the same time, he cautioned that resolving the question would take a long time. At the repeated urgings of the Hungarian authorities, transmitted via the minister to Rome, Hamvas finally agreed to raise the issue during a scheduled meeting with both Secretary of State Cicognani and Samorè before traveling home, at which time he would point out that those priests in question had asked the approval of the apostolic administrator of Esztergom prior to their election as deputies.¹⁸⁸ During the talks, which took place on December 6, Hamvas indeed raised the issue, but both Cicognani and Samorè gave the reply that a settlement of the matter was a quite difficult task.¹⁸⁹ The bishop of Csanád in any case made one further attempt to fulfill the mandate from the state: on the very day of his consultation at the Secretariat of State he wrote a letter to Pope Paul VI petitioning for a settlement of the priest-deputies' cases.¹⁹⁰

Despite Hamvas's persistent petitioning, however, no progress could be made in the matter. The State Office for Church Affairs also had to concede that without a concrete solution proposal the Holy See would not take serious steps. For this reason, during the third council session they had József Bánk draft a written submission and encouraged all the bishops to continue pressing for a settlement in the case of priests who had been excommunicated under the 1957 decree.¹⁹¹ By November 17, 1964 Bánk had worked out the memorandum, which Hamvas then submitted to the Secretariat of State on November 19.¹⁹² The issue, however, was not brought up during the next papal audience, and Casaroli made it obvious that the Holy See for the time being did not wish to resolve the matter of the priests subjected to ecclesiastical punishments. It saw the prospect of progress only in the event Legal Edict No. 22 of 1957 were amended, but even then only in the spirit of justice and fairness, and to the benefit of the Church.¹⁹³

Having determined that settling the issue was not at all important to the Vatican, the bishops took no substantive steps towards reaching a solution during the fourth session either. Although they dutifully raised the problem with Casaroli, they did not push the matter too much. Only Sándor Klempa and József Ijjas submitted written petitions, but the Holy See again reminded them that once the Holy Office made a pronouncement, it was difficult to

revoke it. The lifting of the excommunications moreover was also difficult to solve because the decision banning priests from serving as deputies applied not only to Hungary.¹⁹⁴ It made no difference that the Hungarian government viewed the matter as crucial, and the Hungarian bishops, bowing to state pressure, were forced to act for the sake of a solution, the matter of the priests subjected to ecclesiastical punishment continued to remain in abeyance at the time of Vatican II.¹⁹⁵

The third major subject discussed between the Holy See and the Hungarian bishops was the matter of priestly training. During the first period in this case, too, it was a question of gathering information on priestly formation in Hungary as well as the clandestine ordinations decried by the Hungarian government. During the first session, Endre Hamvas, Sándor Kovács, and Pál Brezanóczy inquired at the Secretariat of State about the background to the secret ordination of seminarians expelled from the Central Seminary in 1959. The answer they received was that the Holy See had not issued orders for such ordinations. Therefore, prior to the second council session the Bench of Bishops decided that during the session Hamvas should obtain a promise from the Holy See that such or similar instances would not take place in the future.¹⁹⁶ In November 1963 Hamvas in fact handed Casaroli a letter addressing the matter of the clandestine ordinations and the authority over this.¹⁹⁷ Hamvas's letter must have been at least partly responsible for Samorè stressing during the second session the high importance of nurturing the appropriate mentality for the seminaries. However, his proposal on priestly training in Hungary, namely, that the diocesan seminaries should be restored, was deflected by Brezanóczy, who claimed that the low number of seminarians would hardly make this feasible economically.¹⁹⁸

Beginning with the third session, the central topic was no longer priestly training in Hungary but rather questions concerning the Pontifical Hungarian Institute, which under the terms of the 1964 partial agreement had once again come under the jurisdiction of the Hungarian bishops. Although the right to appoint the institute's director belonged to the Holy See, here too the Hungarian government's prior consent was needed. As in the case of the episcopal appointments, in this case, too, the task of recommending suitable candidates for the Holy See fell to the Hungarian chief pastors. In the end, however, none of the candidates recommended by the Bench of Bishops (Ferenc Erdey, Imre Timkó and Ferenc Gál) became director of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute.

The Hungarian government and the Holy See agreed on the professor of theology, György Zemplén.¹⁹⁹

Henceforth the Hungarian bishops worked on consolidating the ability of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute to function. On the one hand, this meant securing the institution's financial situation; for this József Ijjas succeed in obtaining a part of the American Mihalik endowment during the fourth session.²⁰⁰ The other important task was to defend the credibility of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute. Based on news deriving from the emigration it was claimed—with reason—that it was not the Hungarian Bench of Bishops but the state who nominated the institute's scholarship recipients. To clarify the basis in reality for the charges Cardinal Giuseppe Pizzardo even addressed a letter to Bishop Ijjas. During their talks with Casaroli, Ijjas and Bánk refuted the charge, however. In order to prove that the scholarship recipients were not the state's men but the bishops' candidates, Ijjas presented the original documents. For his part Bánk argued, among other things, that Kálmán Tölgyes was widely known to be Lajos Shvoy's man. These arguments succeeded in convincing the Holy See that the claims were mere slander. In fact, in January 1966 they even managed to secure an audience with the pope for the institute's leaders and students.²⁰¹ By proving the ecclesiastical character of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute, however, the Hungarian chief pastors not only defended the honor of the Hungarian episcopate, but also—*nolens volens*—rendered a great service to Hungarian state security's large-scale plans for the institute, as described above.

3.3.3. Reinforcing loyalty to Rome

When authorizing the presence of the Hungarian chief pastors at the Council, the leaders of Hungarian church-policy made the assessment that the benefits to be gained from traveling to Rome outweighed the risks stemming from participation. Yet, they subsequently devoted special attention to how a visit to Rome and direct contact with the Holy See might negatively impact (from the state's perspective) the Hungarian church leadership. Analyzing the experiences, first of all following the 1964 partial agreement, from the third council session on they could perceive the signs that the Holy See was exhorting the Hungarian bishops to represent the Church's interests with

greater resolve. Naturally, the analyses exaggerate when speaking of “forcible political re-education” and the “monetary influencing” of Hungarian church leaders.²⁰² Yet they are not mistaken in stating Rome wished to utilize the discussions with the bishops and especially the papal audiences not least also to strengthen them psychologically and remove them from state influence the greatest possible.²⁰³ As pointed out above, using attendance at the Council to draw ties with the Hungarian Church closer was also a truly important element of John XXIII’s plan. The personal encounters in and of themselves likewise presented an outstanding opportunity to strengthen loyalty to Rome and encourage the chief pastors. On this question Paul VI unreservedly shared his predecessor’s views.

It was necessary first and foremost to dispel the Hungarian bishops’ fears and awaken their trust in Rome. The sources analyzed unmistakably show the great relief the Hungarian council fathers felt when, instead of reprimands and lectures, they were granted a sympathetic reception. After the first papal audience they spoke effusively of the approachability of John XXIII, “who hurried to receive them, lifting them up and embracing them after they had kissed his hand.” They highlighted furthermore that “the pope displayed a sincere and deep understanding of the Hungarian Catholic Church’s problems, and from the entire atmosphere of the reception and the pope’s conduct they concluded that he approved of their activity.”²⁰⁴ The bishops were similarly relieved when Paul VI, instead of attacking them at the audience, emphasized the positives of the Hungarian ecclesiastical conditions, reaffirming that in the future the Holy See seriously wished to rely on the Hungarian episcopate.²⁰⁵

Apart from dispelling fears exhorting the Hungarian chief pastors to show loyalty and heroism was also an important element, and Pope Paul VI deliberately used every audience to strengthen the bishops. On November 12, 1963 he indirectly praised the bishops’ loyalty and heroism.²⁰⁶ On November 14, 1964, remembering the brother bishops not allowed to attend the Council he called for loyalty to Christ and the Church.²⁰⁷ Then on December 2, 1965 the Holy Father once again voiced his appreciation for the Hungarian bishops’ loyalty to the Holy See, and, despite the present persecutions they faced, encouraged the leaders of the Hungarian Church with the hope of a better future.²⁰⁸

Nevertheless, the Hungarian bishops received more than just general encouragement in Rome. Apart from reinvigorating the episcopate with new members, the Holy See also offered the Hungarian council fathers specific guidance about how they should try to promote the cause of the Church in Hungary. The Vatican designated the intensification of religious life and a strengthening of religiosity among the faithful as one of the most important tasks. In practice, for this the reintroduction of parochial missions as well as study of the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity (*Apostolicam Actuositatem*) were recommended to the bishops' attention.²⁰⁹

As part of strengthening the faith of believers, the Holy See called particular attention to the need to deal with youth more intensively.²¹⁰ Paul VI specially emphasized that the Council's guidelines on the religious education of youth must also be put into effect.²¹¹ At the same time the pope not only made mention of Catholic schools, "the number of which has unfortunately waned,"²¹² but also expressed his concern about the diminishing number of seminarians and the struggling priestly training. Although he entrusted the bishops with remedying the difficulties related to the decline of vocations, he cautioned them to apply the greatest care in the proper selection of seminary superiors, instructors and spiritual directors.²¹³

In the final analysis, the Holy See signed the partial agreement of 1964 in order to deflect at least in part the obstacles to pastoral care. This meant in the first place guaranteeing as fully as possible the free exercise of ecclesiastical governance. For this reason the Holy See asked the bishops to attempt to enforce the Vatican demands set down in the protocol and defend their rights to govern their dioceses on the basis of the agreement. In practice it was recommended that the ordinaries consider dispositions thoroughly. At the same time, they were instructed, should the state impose an unworthy person on them, to report this to Rome. There exists a source about this obligation to inform the Holy See even claiming that the bishops had to swear an oath of loyalty in Rome which included the obligation to make a report as well.²¹⁴ To ward off undue state intervention, the Holy See also suggested the following argument: the oath of loyalty to the state provided a sufficient safeguard to allow the bishops, while observing its terms, to freely govern the Church.²¹⁵

For the sake of protecting the freedom of church governance the Holy See gave the bishops instructions concerning the peace priest movement as well. In order to prevent the peace priests from interfering in ecclesiastical government, it designated the gradual removal of unworthily appointed persons as the primary task. In the longer term, on the other hand, they urged completely excluding the peace priest movement. At the same time the Holy See also indicated a way for the bishops, while restricting the influence of the peace priests on ecclesiastical governance, to cite not the loyalty of the leading peace priests to the state or their political activity on its behalf, but rather their acceptable conduct from the point of view of the Church: namely, the peace priest movement was a force that divided the ecclesiastical hierarchy and demoralized church discipline.²¹⁶ For his part, Paul VI emphasized precisely that defending the cause of the Church could succeed only if the bishops were united both with one another and with Rome.²¹⁷

The Holy See's exhortations did not bring about a radical change in the Hungarian bishops' cautious behavior, but the chief pastors did attempt to translate the message received in Rome into action. One indication of this is, for example, that in analyzing the impact made by the third council session the Hungarian authorities were forced to conclude: "The multilateral Vatican influence on the bishops has fallen on fertile soil, because the bishops returning from the Council in keeping with their personalities—some more openly, others covertly—are attempting to implant the ideas for which the Vatican prepared them. We encounter concrete manifestations of those aspirations which are aimed at removing prominent peace priests, reviving religious life, and making the life of the Church more effective. The new bishops, emphasizing at every turn their reality towards the state (!), do everything in order to satisfy the Vatican's wishes, citing that the Vatican expected results of them. Their achievements are not proportionate to their ambitions, though in certain areas they have achieved successes."²¹⁸

Behind the above assessment lies, among other things, Endre Hamvas's truly serious determination to remove, in accordance with the Holy See's desires, Imre Várkonyi from his post of archvicer capitular of Kalocsa. In the end, the authorities could not ward off this move, which was grounded in canon law and well-timed.²¹⁹ The measures taken by Sándor Kovács likewise caused bewilderment for those guiding church policy. In conformity with the

Vatican directions he did everything possible to use the 1964 agreement to improve religious life and make the clergy and the faithful active. In the interests of promoting religious life he held regular conferences for his priests and also monitored more closely whether they put what was heard there into practice. He deflected any attempt to interfere in his functions of ecclesiastical governance by declaring he could not do anything for which he would be reported and held accountable at the Vatican.²²⁰

Notes

- ¹ Cf. above, Part I, Chapter 3.3.
- ² Memorandum of ÁEH officier László Bai on the field-days of January 10–14, 1963 in Győr and Székesfehérvár. Budapest, January 16, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. H-31-1/a/1963; *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1132.
- ³ Report of the III/III-1 Section of the Police Headquarters of Borsod County on Bertalan Badalik. Miskolc, January 4, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-12 547/6. Badalik Bertalan, 208–209.
- ⁴ Memorandum on talks with Bishop Lajos Shvoy. Budapest, March 23, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0033-10/a/1964.
- ⁵ Bishop Lajos Shvoy to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Székesfehérvár, June 11, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. Sz-18-4/1964; Vilmos Lóránt's report on field-day. June 12, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. H-31-1/h/1964. Already the previous year Miklós Dudás had asked to be allowed to travel to Rome: Bishop Miklós Dudás of Hajdúdorog to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Nyíregyháza, August 23, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-7/a/1963.
- ⁶ Memorandum on talks with Bishop Lajos Shvoy. Budapest, March 23, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0033-10/a/1964.
- ⁷ Speech of Mihály Korom. Minutes of the Politburo's session of August 11, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 195. Shvoy consistently strove to obtain permission to attend the Council because it was his conviction that the Hungarian prelates in attendance did not represent the Hungarian Church. Cf. Memorandum on Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár. Budapest, February 5, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0033-10/a/1964.
- ⁸ Vilmos Lóránt's report on field-day. June 12, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. H-31-1/h/1964; Bai László's report on field-day in Székesfehérvár. Budapest, July 24, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. H-31-1/a/1964.
- ⁹ Speech of Mihály Korom. Minutes of the Politburo's session of August 11, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 195.

- ¹⁰ Archbishop Pericle Felici to Archbishop Endre Hamvas of Kalocsa. Vatican City, July 16, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/j/1965; Pericle Felici a Hamvas (Fotocopia di minuta). Vatican City, July 16 1965, ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 342, fasc. 4.
- ¹¹ Archbishop Endre Hamvas of Kalocsa to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Kalocsa, May 10, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/a/1965.
- ¹² Archbishop Endre Hamvas of Kalocsa to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Kalocsa, August 7, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/i/ 1965. Hamvas also briefed the members of the episcopal conference on his request: *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1264.
- ¹³ Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Székesfehérvár, July 30, 1965, and ÁEH Deputy Chairman Imre Miklós to Lajos Shvoy. August 18, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/f/1965; Auxiliary Bishop Imre Kisberk Imre to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Székesfehérvár, August 2, 1965, and ÁEH Deputy Chairman Imre Miklós to Imre Kisberk. Budapest, August 18, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/e/1965; Memorandum on Auxiliary Bishop Imre Kisberk of Székesfehérvár. Budapest, January 11, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0033-10/b/1964; Bishop Miklós Dudás to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Nyíregyháza, August 5, 1965, and ÁEH Deputy Chairman Imre Miklós to Miklós Dudás. Budapest, August 18, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/g/1965; Gellért Belon to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Miske, August 6, 1965, and ÁEH Deputy Chairman Imre Miklós to Gellért Belon. Budapest, August 18, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/k/1965; Auxiliary Bishop Mihály Endrey to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Budapest, August 9, 1965, and ÁEH Deputy Chairman Imre Miklós to Mihály Endrey. Budapest, August 18, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/h/1965.
- ¹⁴ ÁEH Deputy Chairman Imre Miklós to Archbishop Endre Hamvas of Kalocsa. Budapest, August 18, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/i/1965.
- ¹⁵ Archbishop Endre Hamvas of Kalocsa to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. Kalocsa, August 23, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-6/1965; Archiepiscopal Vicar László Pintér to ÁEH Head of Department László Nagy. Kalocsa, October 11, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-6/a/1965.
- ¹⁶ Cf. Handwritten letter of Auxiliary Bishop Imre Szabó. September 22, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-8/1962; Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád to Miklós Esty. Szeged, August 22, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-2/c/1964; *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1156-57, 1253, 1262; Action plan of the ÁEH on the signature of the partial agreement and Session Three of the Council. September 11, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 200-201.

- ¹⁷ ÁEH Chairman József Prantner to Police Lieutenant Colonel Károly Szabó, head of the IM's Passport Department. Budapest, September 16, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-2-126/b/1964.
- ¹⁸ Schedule of the tasks concerning Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 24, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-4/h/1965.
- ¹⁹ Such scenarios include: Action plan of the ÁEH on the signature of the partial agreement and Session Three of the Council. September 11, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 200–201; Schedule of the tasks concerning Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 24, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-4/h/1965.
- ²⁰ *Magyar Kurír*, October 4, 1962; Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 350, 365–66, 373–74, 386–87; Saád, *Zsinat*, 104–105.
- ²¹ Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on December 19, 1962. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1126; Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Undated. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. “Canale,” 187; Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 365.
- ²² Saád, *Zsinat*, 104; Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 373, 387; Action plan of the ÁEH on the signature of the partial agreement and Session Three of the Council. September 11, 1964, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 200–201; Schedule of the tasks concerning Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, August 24, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-4/h/1965.
- ²³ Visit of the Hungarian bishops at the Rome embassy. Rome, October 18, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Olaszország 1945–1964. 5/i-008039/1962.
- ²⁴ Report on the experiences of the first session of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, June 6, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 140.
- ²⁵ On the second session: Dispatch no. 2200 from Rome. Budapest, September 30, 1963. ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs-2/2. “Hontalanok,” 180. On the fourth session, see Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 387.
- ²⁶ Report on the departure of the Hungarian council delegation. December 4, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Olaszország 1945–1964. 4/i-00240/8/1963; Memorandum. Budapest, December 13, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/9-a. “Canale,” 503.
- ²⁷ Cf. The Council's Central Preparatory Commission's letter, signed by Card. Gustavo Testa and Secretary Pericle Felici. Vatican State, January 2, 1962; and Accompanying letter of István Mester, Representative of the Hungarian Bench of Bishops in Rome, to the papal bull. Rome, June 25, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-1/1962.
- ²⁸ Cf. above, Part II, section 1.4.1.
- ²⁹ In fact it was not at all far from the Vatican, since from the bus stop located about 8–10 minutes walk from the house (Piazza Imerio) the No. 46 bus, running approx. every 15 minutes, took on average eight minutes to reach Saint Peter's Square (Besides this, a separate council bus line, Number 20, was also set up between the

- Domus Mariae* and Saint Peter's Square). Report on my trip between July 10 and August 25, 1962 (Polikárp Radó, Undated). ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. "Canale," 294-95; Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 361. On the council fathers' lodgings and the covering of their expenses, see *History of Vatican II*, Vol. I, 495-99.
- ³⁰ *History of Vatican II*, Vol. II, 207-209; Noël, "Incontri delle conferenze," 95-133.
- ³¹ Report of agent "Kerekes" on the Council. December 16, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. "Canale," 301; IM report. Budapest, November 11, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0037-23/1963.
- ³² Archbishop Pericle Felici to Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád. Vatican, September 11, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-9/1963.
- ³³ IM Report. Budapest, November 12, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0037-23/1963.
- ³⁴ Information report on the council delegation. Budapest, November 11, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. "Canale," 229. In fact, the degree of separation should not be overstated in the way suggested by the state security documents: the distance between the Franciscan nuns' house and the *Domus Mariae* is not more than 1.3 km in total, which equals an approximately twenty-minute walk.
- ³⁵ Report of György Vitányi for the ÁEH. December 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. "Canale," 340.
- ³⁶ Proposal of Imre Várkonyi. July 28, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-4/1965. In the end the recommendation was not implemented. The Hungarian council fathers lived at the *Domus Mariae* at the fourth session as well. Only Sándor Kovács and Vince Kovács stayed at the Salvator Mundi hospital during the third and fourth sessions. Cf. Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 388; On the Hungarian council delegation. January 5, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 5.
- ³⁷ The existence of the spending money is mentioned, for example, by Hamvas: Report of Hungarian minister to Rome Száll to Foreign Minister Péter on the meeting with the Hungarian council delegation. Rome, November 17, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Vatikán 1945-1964. IV-14/1960-63.
- ³⁸ ÁEH Deputy Chairman Imre Miklós to Deputy Minister of Finance Béla Sulyok. Budapest, September 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-11/1962.
- ³⁹ Meetings with the members of the Hungarian council delegation. Rome, October 31, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Olaszország 1945-1964. 5/i-008039/1/1962.
- ⁴⁰ Report of Hungarian minister to Rome Száll to Foreign Minister Péter on the meeting with the Hungarian council delegation. Rome, November 17, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Vatikán 1945-1964. IV-14/1960-63.
- ⁴¹ ÁEH Deputy Chairman Imre Miklós to Deputy Minister of Finance Béla Sulyok. Budapest, September 27, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-11/1962.

- ⁴² ÁEH Chairman József Prantner to Minister of Finance Mátyás Tímár. Budapest, September 2, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-2-126/a/1964. From this sum Prantner later transferred 1,300 USD to the embassy in Rome to meet the needs of the Hungarian prelates attending the third session of the Council. Cf. ÁEH Chairman József Prantner to the Hungarian minister to Rome József Száll. Budapest, September 21, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-2-126/c/1964.
- ⁴³ Report of agent "Kékes" on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. "Canale," 41-45.
- ⁴⁴ Report of agent "Béla Molnár" on the Hungarian council delegation. October 30, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. "Canale," 216.
- ⁴⁵ Oral report of agent "György" on the Vatican Council. December 17, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/4, "Canale," 307-308.
- ⁴⁶ Undated report of agent "Béla Molnár" on the second session. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. "Canale," 68.
- ⁴⁷ Oral report of agent "György" on the Vatican Council. December 17, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/4, "Canale," 319.
- ⁴⁸ Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 132.
- ⁴⁹ Report of agent "Kecskeméti." Szeged, August 18, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/9-a. "Canale," 322-23.
- ⁵⁰ Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 131.
- ⁵¹ IM report. Budapest, November 12, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0037-23/1963.
- ⁵² Oral report of agent "György" on the Vatican Council. December 17, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/4. "Canale," 309. The Secretariat of State accepted handwritten reports from Hamvas as well. Report of Agent "Kecskeméti" on the contacts of the council delegation to the Holy See and Secretariat of State. Szeged, January 13, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7, "Canale," 114.
- ⁵³ "His task was to allow his uncle to attend to matters through him uninterrupted, bypassing others." Oral report of agent "György" on the Vatican Council. December 17, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/4, "Canale," 315-16.
- ⁵⁴ Report of agent "György" on the Council. January 19, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 18.
- ⁵⁵ Copy of the letter of Hungarian minister to Rome Száll to Foreign Minister Péter. Rome, October 30, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-47/1963.
- ⁵⁶ Report of agent "Kerekes" on the Council. December 16, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. "Canale," 303.

- ⁵⁷ Oral report of agent "György" on the Vatican Council. December 17, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/4, "Canale," 308.
- ⁵⁸ Report of János Rátkai, chief rapporteur on church affairs on the situation of Csongrád County. December 19, 1959. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1960/6. ő. e. 43. and Report of agent "Kékes" on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. "Canale," 42.
- ⁵⁹ Report on conversation with György Vitányi, social contact. Budapest, November 29, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/4. "Canale," 270.
- ⁶⁰ Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 133.
- ⁶¹ Incomplete summary material relating to the third session. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. "Canale," 305-13, in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 173-81.
- ⁶² Memorandum on a conversation with Dr. József Bánk. Budapest, November 26, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-4/i/1964.
- ⁶³ Memorandum for Prantner on talks with Bishop Imre Szabó. Budapest, December 12, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0033-13/1963. So much did the psychological burden involved with the trip wear on Bishop Szabó that at the end of the second session he could no longer even sleep, and his weight dropped from 120 kg to 78. As a consequence of the negative experiences he himself indicated to the state authorities that he did not wish to attend the Council's third session. Report of István Turai. Budapest, September 10, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-3/a/1964. Imre Szabó did take part in the third session nonetheless, though after the consecration of the new bishops in Budapest he did not return to Rome. Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 373; Incomplete report on the third session. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a. 305-306, in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 173.
- ⁶⁴ On the Hungarian council delegation. January 5, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 2-4; Report of agent "György" on the Council. December 23, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 138-139.
- ⁶⁵ Report of ÁEH Chairman József Prantner for the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. December 30, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 290.
- ⁶⁶ Oral report of agent "György" on the Vatican Council. December 17, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/4. "Canale," 310-11; Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 134.
- ⁶⁷ Summary report on the case of Bishop Sándor Kovács. Szombathely, June 14, 1972. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 759/11. Kovács Sándor. 236-239; Report of agent "Pátkai" on the Council. December 30, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. "Canale," 329a,

- 331a; Oral report of agent “György” on the Vatican Council. December 17, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/4. “Canale,” 310.
- ⁶⁸ Endre Hamvas to Pericle Felici. Budapest, November 19, 1965. ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 582, fasc. 2. Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 132; Report of agent “György” on the Council. December 23, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 138–39; Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation at Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, November 11, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 133.
- ⁶⁹ Memorandum for Prantner on talks with Bishop Imre Szabó. Budapest, December 12, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0033–13/1963.
- ⁷⁰ Report of agent “Kerekes” on the second session. Szeged, January 11, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 96–97; Oral report of agent “György” on the Vatican Council. December 17, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/4. “Canale,” 307–308.
- ⁷¹ Information report on the papal audience of the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, December 8, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 137.
- ⁷² Report of György Vitányi for the ÁEH on the Council. December 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. 340.
- ⁷³ This may be deduced, for example, from the circumstances of the handover of the *nota verbale*. Cf. Below, Part II, Chapter 3.3.2.
- ⁷⁴ Rétfalvi, “Kovács Sándor szombathelyi püspök,” 51.
- ⁷⁵ Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on December 19, 1962. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1127; Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 48; Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on December 22, 1965. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1266–1267; Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 357–58, 396–97.
- ⁷⁶ Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on December 19, 1962. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1127–28. On the relationships that developed at the subsequent sessions, see also: Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 381–82.
- ⁷⁷ Regarding the financial aid collected during the Council, much data can be found in the minutes of the Episcopal Conference. See also: Information report on Session Three of the Second Vatican Council. 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 51–52; Memorandum on the international material support to the Hungarian Catholic Church. Budapest, December 11, 1964. MNL-OL M–KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1964/15. ő. e. 120–122; Bishop József Cserháti of Pécs to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner. May 31, 1966. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. P–17–1/1966.
- ⁷⁸ *Animadversiones scripto exhibitae quoad cap. II. schematis de s. Liturgia*. Alexander Kovács. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. I, *Pars II*, 241.

- ⁷⁹ Animadversiones scripto exhibitae quoad cap. III. schematis de s. Liturgia. Alexander Kovács. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. I, *Pars II*, 370.
- ⁸⁰ Report on my trip between July 10 and August 25, 1962 (Polikárp Radó, Undated). ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/2. “Canale,” 298.
- ⁸¹ Animadversiones scripto exhibitae quoad cap. II. schematis de Ecclesia. Andreas Hamvas. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. II, *Pars II*, 778–79. The contents of the intervention is summarized in Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 367. Cf. also: Undated report of agent “Béla Molnár” on the second session. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 67.
- ⁸² Report of agent “Pátkai” on the Council. December 16, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. 294.
- ⁸³ Rétfalvi, “Kovács Sándor szombathelyi püspök,” 66; Report of agent “Kékes” on second session of the Council. Undated. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 188.
- ⁸⁴ Animadversiones scripto exhibitae quoad cap. IV. scematis de Ecclesia. Alexander Kovács. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. II, *Pars IV*, 234–37.
- ⁸⁵ In particular: *Lumen Gentium*, nos. 39–42.
- ⁸⁶ Animadversiones scripto exhibitae quoad capp. III–IV. schematis de Episcopis ac dioecesium regimine. Andreas Hamvas. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. II, *Pars V*, 312–14.
- ⁸⁷ On this, and the implementation or non-implementation of Hamvas’s other proposals, see *Christus Dominus*, nos. 37–38.
- ⁸⁸ Animadversiones scripto exhibitae quoad capp. III–IV. schematis de Episcopis ac dioecesium regimine. Conferentia episcoporum Hungariae. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. II, *Pars V*, 346–54.
- ⁸⁹ Paulus PP. VI, “Motu proprio *Apostolica sollicitudo*.” (September 15, 1965) *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 57 (1965): 775–80.
- ⁹⁰ *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. II, *Pars V*, 349.
- ⁹¹ *Christus Dominus*, no. 27.
- ⁹² Numerous questions contained in the Hungarian recommendations found their way in some form into the motu proprio *Ecclesiae Sanctae*, dated August 6, 1966, on the implementation of the decrees *Christus Dominus* and *Presbyterorum Ordinis*. Excerpts are published in Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 324–39.
- ⁹³ In the end, *Christus Dominus* continued to use the two words as synonyms.
- ⁹⁴ Undated report of agent “Béla Molnár” on the second session. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 67–68; Report of agent “János Kiss” on the council delegation. Undated. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 173.
- ⁹⁵ Congar, *Mon journal*, 558.

- ⁹⁶ Congregatio generalis LXXII. Patrum orationes de Oecumenismo in genere. Andreas Hamvas. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. II, *Pars V*, 677–82; Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 367–68, relies on the version appearing in the press.
- ⁹⁷ Undated report of agent “Béla Molnár” on the second session. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 68; Telephone report of the Új Ember correspondant on the speech of Hamvas. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. V–37–11/1963; Report of agent “Kövér” on the Council. January 10, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 45.
- ⁹⁸ Extract from the report of agent “Dudás” provided on December 6, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/4. “Canale,” 296.
- ⁹⁹ *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. II, *Pars V*, 677.
- ¹⁰⁰ Report on conversation with György Vitányi, social contact. Budapest, November 29, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/4. “Canale,” 267–70.
- ¹⁰¹ *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. II, *Pars V*, 680–81.
- ¹⁰² Animadversiones scripto exhibitae quoad schema voti de Matrimonii sacramento. Ioseph Bánk. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. III, *Pars VIII*, 685–88.
- ¹⁰³ Congregatio generalis CI. Patrum orationes de vita et ministerio sacerdotali. Ioseph Bánk. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. III, *Pars IV*, 408–11.
- ¹⁰⁴ Congregatio generalis CLI. Patrum orationes (de ministerio et vita presbyterorum). Ioseph Bánk. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. IV, *Pars V*, 50–52. The content is summarized in Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 395.
- ¹⁰⁵ Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 392.
- ¹⁰⁶ Animadversiones scripto exhibitae quoad schema decreti De ministerio et vita presbyterorum. Ioseph Cserháti. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. IV, *Pars V*, 273–75. The content is summarized in Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 392–95.
- ¹⁰⁷ Animadversiones scripto exhibitae quoad schema propositionum de Institutione sacerdotali. Ioseph Bánk. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. III, *Pars VIII*, 249–52. An incomplete summary of the content is given by Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 379–80.
- ¹⁰⁸ Animadversiones scripto exhibitae quoad schema propositionum de Institutione sacerdotali. Ioseph Cserháti. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. III, *Pars VIII*, 272–75.
- ¹⁰⁹ Information report on Session Three of the Second Vatican Council. 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 53–54.
- ¹¹⁰ Report of György Vitányi for the ÁEH on the Council. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. 333.
- ¹¹¹ Ibid, 333, 335–36; Information report on the contacts between the French and Hungarian bishops. Budapest, October 20, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/8–a. “Canale,” 257–58.
- ¹¹² Congregatio generalis CVII. Patrum orationes de Eccl. in mundo huius temporis in genere. Andreas Hamvas. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. III, *Pars V*, 344–46. For a

Hungarian translation of nearly the entire intervention, see Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 377–79.

¹¹³ Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 378.

¹¹⁴ *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. III, *Pars V*, 346, note 5. Our knowledge of the section crossed out by Cardinal Döpfner comes from Vitányi: Report of György Vitányi for the ÁEH on the Council. 1964. december. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. “Canale,” 335–36.

¹¹⁵ Information report on the failed speech of Archbishop Hamvas. Budapest, September 29, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 120; and Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, November 10, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 129–32; *Animadversiones scripto exhibitae quoad schema De Eccl. in mundo huius temporis* (in genere, prooemium, introductionem, partem I.) Andreas Hamvas. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. IV, *Pars II*, 758–61.

¹¹⁶ Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 389.

¹¹⁷ *Ibid.*, 389–90.

¹¹⁸ *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. IV, *Pars II*, 760–61.

¹¹⁹ *Congregatio generalis CXLIII. Patrum orationes (de Ecclesia in mundo huius temporis cap. V. partis II)* Paulus Brezanóczy. *Acta Synodalia*, Vol. IV, III, 633–34.

¹²⁰ Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on December 17, 1963. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1168–1169.

¹²¹ Report of György Vitányi for the ÁEH on the Council. December 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. “Canale,” 335.

¹²² Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, November 10, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 129.

¹²³ On the Hungarian council delegation. January 5, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 2–8. The more, Hamvas has asked permission to intervene in the discussion of Schema 13 already from Budapest. Telegram of Archbishop Endre Hamvas of Kalocsa to Pericle Felici, secretary of the Council. Budapest, September 8, 1965. ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 593, fasc. 4.

¹²⁴ Information report on the Second Vatican Council drafted by ÁEH Head of Department László Nagy. Budapest, December 28, 1966. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. V–37–4/1966.

¹²⁵ Cf. Speech-draft for the *constitutio pastoralis* “De Ecclesia in mundo huius temporis”; Draft of the common speech of the Hungarian council fathers to the schema 13. September 13, 1965. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. V–37–8/1965.

¹²⁶ Cf. Report of agent “Béla Molnár” on the first session. Budapest, January 7, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5, “Canale,” 8, and Report of agent “Illés” on the Hungarian

- council delegation. Kecskemét, November 8, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/4. "Canale," 190-91.
- ¹²⁷ Memorandum of Miklós Beresztóczy. Budapest, November 30, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-12/j/1962.
- ¹²⁸ Report of agent "Kecskeméti" on the opinion of the emigré priest on the episcopal candidates. Szeged, January 13, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 112.
- ¹²⁹ Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation at Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, November 11, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 136.
- ¹³⁰ Ijjas was shaken by the denunciation against him, denunciations against Sándor Klempa were made by, among others, Hugó Márton and Csertő. Information report on the denunciation by Sándor Csertő against Sándor Klempa. Budapest, November 23, 1964. ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs-2/5. "Hontalanok," 215; Incomplete report on the third session. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7-a, 305-306, in Kahler, *III/III-as történelmi olvasókönyv* 3, 173-74; Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation at Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, November 11, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 135-36.
- ¹³¹ By virtue of being primate, Mindszenty would have demanded that they discuss every question with him first. "Relazione di Mons. Casaroli sulle sue visite al Card. Mindszenty (con allegato). 18 aprile 1964," in Barberini, *La politica*, 130-31. The competing roles of Mindszenty and Hamvas are pointed out by Somorjai, *Sancta Sedes. II*, 157-70.
- ¹³² Report of agent "Kékes" on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. "Canale," 42.
- ¹³³ Report of agent "Kecskeméti" on the Hungarian council delegation. Szeged, January 13, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 108. Cf. the already quoted case, of 1961, when Holy Office did not approve that Hamvas would be appointed member of any Pontifical Commission of the Second Vatican Council. Angelo dell'Acqua to Pericle Felici. November 9, 1961. ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 319, fasc. 5.
- ¹³⁴ Information report on the affirmations of Angelo Dell'Acqua on Bishop Hamvas. Budapest, January 22, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/3. "Canale," 190.
- ¹³⁵ Report of agent "Illés" on the Hungarian council delegation. Kecskemét, November 8, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/4. "Canale," 190-91; and Memorandum of Sándor Telepó on the trip of Gergely Alajos Tamás OFM to Izrael. Budapest, February 13, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-2-33/1964.
- ¹³⁶ Cf. "Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulla ripresa dei contatti con il Governo ungherese [Budapest, 14-24 marzo 1964 (con n. 7 allegati)] 10 aprile 1964," in Barberini, *La politica*, 116; "Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card.

Segretario di Stato sulle provviste vescovili in Ungheria (con 4 allegati). 24 aprile 1964,” in *ibid.*, 149.

- ¹³⁷ This is revealed at least from the words of the Piarist Superior Vince Tomek, who possessed outstanding connections in the Curia. Cf. On the Hungarian council delegation. October 1, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0037-18/1963.
- ¹³⁸ Memorandum of Sándor Telepó on the trip of Gergely Alajos Tamás OFM to Israel. Budapest, February 13, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-2-33/1964.
- ¹³⁹ Cf. “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulle provviste vescovili in Ungheria (con 4 allegati). 24 aprile 1964,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 150. Despite the fact that the Holy See did not elevate Brezanóczy to a position of leadership, later as secretary of the officially formed Conference of Bishops, he would play an important role in shaping Hungarian church policy.
- ¹⁴⁰ Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. “Canale,” 47. See also above Part II, chapter 1.4.1.
- ¹⁴¹ On the Hungarian council delegation. January 5, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. “Canale,” 6.
- ¹⁴² For example, at the first session, Imre Timkó was asked for an account of the situation of the Greek Catholics, while at the second session István Rojkovich was also summoned to the Congregation for the Oriental Churches. Report on the experiences of the group journey of priests abroad. Nyíregyháza, December 13, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/4. 301-304.
- ¹⁴³ Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. “Canale,” 32.
- ¹⁴⁴ Information report on the Council. Budapest, November 30, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 326-27.
- ¹⁴⁵ Meetings with the members of the Hungarian council delegation. Rome, October 31, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Olaszország 1945-1964. 5/i-008039/1-1962.
- ¹⁴⁶ Information report on the Hungarian bishops attending the Council. Budapest, November 13, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 317.
- ¹⁴⁷ Report on the Vatican decree concerning the Hungarian Catholic Church. Budapest, June 26, 1962. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/2. “Canale,” 166. For a Hungarian assessment of the decree: Information report on the Ecumenical Council. Budapest, June 26, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-7/1962. 6.
- ¹⁴⁸ Report of Hungarian minister to Rome Száll to Foreign Minister Péter on the meeting with the Hungarian council delegation. Rome, November 17, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Vatikán 1945-1964. IV-14/1960-63.
- ¹⁴⁹ “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli su un colloquio di Mons. Zabkar con Mons. Brezanóczy, Amm. Ap. di Eger. 4 dicembre 1962,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 37-42.

- ¹⁵⁰ Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. “Canale,” 29.
- ¹⁵¹ Cf. Memorandum of Miklós Beresztóczy. Budapest, November 30, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-12/j/1962.
- ¹⁵² Cf. Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. “Canale,” 26–50. For this reason, in the spring of 1963 during the talks in Vienna too, Brezanóczy argued—seemingly on his own initiative—in favor of commencing negotiations with the government. Cf. Somorjai, *Sancta Sedes. II*, 157–64.
- ¹⁵³ Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation at Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, November 11, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. 135.
- ¹⁵⁴ Memorandum of ÁEH Deputy Chairman Imre Miklós on his conversation with Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád. Budapest, January 18, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0033-6/1963. Incidentally, Casaroli himself mentioned the delay in presenting the memorandum. “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli sugli incontri con i rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (con cinque Allegati). Vaticano, 18 maggio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 53.
- ¹⁵⁵ It was important to Hamvas that he was the de facto leader of the Hungarian Church. Cf. Somorjai, *Sancta Sedes. II*, 164–67. This was indicated in addition by Brezanóczy’s characterization: “He was somewhat under the spell of the purple, he could be animated by this (pressing the Mindszenty affair). He enjoyed his leading role.” Report of agent “Kékes” on the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 5, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. “Canale,” 42.
- ¹⁵⁶ At least it was in this sense that he spoke with Casaroli at the meeting in Vienna on April 29, 1963. “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli sugli incontri con i rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (con cinque Allegati). Vaticano, 18 maggio 1963,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 53.
- ¹⁵⁷ Ibid., 54–55.
- ¹⁵⁸ Report of Hungarian minister to Rome Száll to Foreign Minister Péter on the meeting with the Hungarian council delegation. Rome, November 17, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Vatikán 1945–1964. IV-14/1960–63.
- ¹⁵⁹ Memorandum of ÁEH Deputy Chairman Imre Miklós on his conversation with Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád. Budapest, January 18, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0033-6/1963.
- ¹⁶⁰ Information report on the council delegation. Budapest, October 30, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. “Canale,” 215.
- ¹⁶¹ Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. “Canale,” 135.

- ¹⁶² Information report on the council delegation. Budapest, December 9, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. "Canale," 211-212.
- ¹⁶³ Information report on the council delegation. Budapest, October 30, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. "Canale," 215, and Information report on the council delegation. Budapest, November 8, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5-a. "Canale," 226.
- ¹⁶⁴ Report of agent "Péter Győri". January 26, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. "Canale," 60.
- ¹⁶⁵ Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 136-37.
- ¹⁶⁶ "Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulle provviste vescovili in Ungheria (con 4 allegati)," in Barberini, *La politica*, 146-56.
- ¹⁶⁷ Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 137.
- ¹⁶⁸ "Relazione di Mons. Casaroli su un colloquio di Mons. Zabkar con Mons. Brezanóczy, Amm. Ap. di Eger. 4 dicembre 1962," in Barberini, *La politica*, 40.
- ¹⁶⁹ Among the candidates Kálmán Lancz, József Cserháti, József Bánk, Imre Timkó, József Winkler, Ferenc Gál, and József Ijjas had studied in Rome, while Pál Brezanóczy and György Kovács had studied in Innsbruck. Elemér Merksz had been a seminarian at the Collegium Pazmanianum.
- ¹⁷⁰ "Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulle provviste vescovili in Ungheria (con 4 allegati) 24 aprile 1964," in Barberini, *La politica*, 149-52.
- ¹⁷¹ *Ibid*, 147.
- ¹⁷² *Ibid*, 140, 146-56.
- ¹⁷³ Pro memoria of József Prantner for the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on his negotiations in the Vatican. June 24, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 254.
- ¹⁷⁴ Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 136.
- ¹⁷⁵ Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 135, and Report of Agent "Kecskeméti" on the contacts of the council delegation to the Holy See and Secretariat of State. Szeged, January 13, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 114.
- ¹⁷⁶ Memorandum. Budapest, December 13, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/9-a. "Canale," 503; On the Hungarian council delegation. January 5, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 5; and Endre Hamvas to Pericle Felici. Rome, October 11, 1965. ASV, Conc. Vat. II, b. 581. fasc. 1.

- ¹⁷⁷ Report of agent "György" on the Council. December 23, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 138-139.
- ¹⁷⁸ Interrogation of agent "Kecskeméti". Szeged, January 25, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 58-59v; Memorandum. Budapest, December 10, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/9-a. "Canale," 502.
- ¹⁷⁹ Memorandum on Bishop Imre Kisberk. Budapest, January 11, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0033-10/b/1964. Despite this, in 1967 he was mentioned as a candidate, which the state rejected. "Resoconto di Mons. Bongianino dei colloqui di Mons. Casaroli con i Rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (Roma, 13-17 gennaio 1967), 30 gennaio 1967," in Barberini, *La politica*, 195. Other data also indicated that, even if the Secretariat of State did not, the Holy Office explicitly desired Kisberk to assume governance of the diocese in the event that Shvoy were impeded. Report of agent "Tanár." Budapest, 1965. április 14. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-13 581/4. "Áruló," 273-74.
- ¹⁸⁰ "Resoconto di Mons. Bongianino dei colloqui di Mons. Casaroli con i Rappresentanti del Governo ungherese (Roma, 13-17 gennaio 1967), 30 gennaio 1967," in Barberini, *La politica*, 194-98.
- ¹⁸¹ Cf. Report of agent "Illés" on his conversations with József Zágon and István Mester. November 8, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 167.
- ¹⁸² Nonetheless, the need to prepare the accompanying agents in this regard dawned only gradually on the Hungarian authorities too: Report of agent "Illés" on his conversations with József Zágon and István Mester. November 8, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 168.
- ¹⁸³ Cf. Negotiations with priests. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0033/1964.
- ¹⁸⁴ Report of agent "Béla Molnár" on the first session. Budapest, January 7, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/5. "Canale," 8.
- ¹⁸⁵ Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád to Pope John XXIII. Budapest, April 26, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-8/1963.
- ¹⁸⁶ Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád to Agostino Casaroli. Budapest, August 23, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-8/1963.
- ¹⁸⁷ Agostino Casaroli to Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád. Vatican, September 17, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-8/1963.
- ¹⁸⁸ Annex to the report no. 001/273. on the conversations of the ambassador in Rome with the prelates attending the Council. Budapest, November 23, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-51/1963, and Annex to the report no. 001/282. the communications of Hamvas. Budapest, December 4, 1963. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 004-60/1963.
- ¹⁸⁹ Report of the IM's Division III/I. on the talks of Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád with Agostino Casaroli and the Hungarian council fathers' negotiations at the

- Vatican Secretariat of State. December 9, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 176–177, and Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 135.
- ¹⁹⁰ Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád to Pope Paul VI. Rome, December 3, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. Cs–12–13/1963.
- ¹⁹¹ Hungarian minister to Rome Száll to Foreign Minister Péter on partial agreement. (After September 25, 1964), in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 232.
- ¹⁹² Report of György Vitányi for the ÁEH on the Council. December 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. “Canale,” 338; Archbishop Endre Hamvas of Kalocsa to Pope Paul VI. Rome, November 19, 1964. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–a. Cs–12–7/b/1964.
- ¹⁹³ Report. Budapest, October 28, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/8–a. “Canale,” 271–72; and Undated report on the meeting between Casaroli and the Hungarian council delegation. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/8–a. “Canale,” 273–75.
- ¹⁹⁴ Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, January 17, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. 10–11.
- ¹⁹⁵ The matter would be settled only parallel to the resolution of the Mindszenty affair. Cf. Adriányi, *Ostpolitik*, 68–69, 80, 88–89; Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 33–35; Balogh, “1971. szeptember 9-ei,” 874–930.
- ¹⁹⁶ Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on September 4, 1963. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1155–56.
- ¹⁹⁷ IM report. Budapest, November 12, 1963. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–d. 0037–23/1963.
- ¹⁹⁸ Negotiations of the Vatican Secretariat of State with the Hungarian bishops. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. “Canale,” 284–85.
- ¹⁹⁹ Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on September 1, 1964. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1214, 1218.
- ²⁰⁰ Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, November 10, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 129–32; Németh, “Mindszenty József,” 89.
- ²⁰¹ Information report on the activities of the Hungarian council delegation. Budapest, November 10, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 129–132; and Report of ÁEH Chairman József Prantner for the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on Session IV of the Second Vatican Council. December 30, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 290–292. By contrast the institute’s residents really were nominated by the state organs, several of them were even agents of state security. Cf. Bandi, “Adalékok,” 174–88. Cf. also Fejérdy, “Regime comunista,” 256–80; Majsai, “Ismereteimet soha,” I–IV.

- ²⁰² Cf. Report. Budapest, October 28, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/8-a. 271-72; Semestral report. Budapest, June 1, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/9. "Canale," 180-83; and Information report on session III of the Second Vatican Council. 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 51-52.
- ²⁰³ Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 130.
- ²⁰⁴ Visit of Hungarian bishops at the embassy. Rome, October 18, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Olaszország 1945-1962. 5/i-008039/1962.
- ²⁰⁵ Report of ÁEH Chairman József Prantner for the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. December 30, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 291.
- ²⁰⁶ Report of the IM's Division III/I on the papal audience. November 15, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 172-73.
- ²⁰⁷ Speech of Pope Paul VI to the Hungarian bishops. (November 14, 1964) MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1964/15. ő. e. 106-13.
- ²⁰⁸ Speech of Pope Paul VI to the Hungarian bishops. (December 2, 1965), in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 287. Cf. Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on December 22, 1965. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1267.
- ²⁰⁹ Cf. Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 136; Speech of Pope Paul VI to the Hungarian bishops. (November 14, 1964) MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1964/15. ő. e. 111-12; Memorandum on the speech of the pope. December 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. E-27-16/1964; Speech of Pope Paul VI to the Hungarian bishops. (December 2, 1965), in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 287-89.
- ²¹⁰ Casaroli spoke about this: Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 136. And Pope Paul VI also mentioned it several times: Memorandum on the speech of the pope. December 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. E-27-16/1964.
- ²¹¹ Speech of Pope Paul VI to the Hungarian bishops. (December 2, 1965), in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 288.
- ²¹² *Ibid.*, 289. The extent to which the pope's speech reflected on the agreement, and especially the points it left open is noteworthy, and he emphasized the spirit of the council resolutions in resolving them.
- ²¹³ *Ibid.*, 288.
- ²¹⁴ Memorandum on the speech of the pope. December 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. E-27-16/1964.

- ²¹⁵ Report. Budapest, October 28, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/8-a. "Canale," 271-72; Speech of Pope Paul VI to the Hungarian bishops (November 14, 1964). MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1964/15. ó. e. 109-11; Information report on Session Three of the Second Vatican Council. 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 50-51.
- ²¹⁶ Semestral report. Budapest, June 1, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/9. "Canale," 180-83; Information report on Session Three of the Second Vatican Council. 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 51; Report of ÁEH Chairman József Prantner for the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. December 30, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 291; Report. Budapest, October 28, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/8-a. "Canale," 271-72.
- ²¹⁷ Speech of Pope Paul VI to the Hungarian bishops (December 2, 1965), in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 288.
- ²¹⁸ Information report on Session Three of the Second Vatican Council. 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 53.
- ²¹⁹ Report. Budapest, October 28, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/8-a. "Canale," 271-72.
- ²²⁰ Report on the activities of Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely. Budapest, March 22, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0033-3/a/1965.

PART III.

EPILOGUE: AFTER THE COUNCIL

1.

Holy See: Dialogue and *Ostpolitik*

1.1. DIALOGUE AFTER THE COUNCIL

The modern image of the Church and the world formulated at Vatican II represented a turning-point both within the Church itself as well as in the relationship between the Church and the world. The new outlook focused on the importance of dialogue, which was realized towards the world in three areas. The Secretariat for Christian Unity, set up in 1960, was responsible for ecumenical relations, and the Secretariat for Non-Christians, established on Pentecost 1964, for interfaith dialogue.¹ The task of the Secretariat for Non-Believers, set up on April 9, 1965, on the other hand, transcended the religious plane, in that it was charged with conducting dialogue with those standing furthest from the Catholic Church, the non-believers, as well as studying the phenomenon of atheism and its various forms.²

The Holy See's post-conciliar position regarding Catholic-Marxist dialogue, and indirectly *Ostpolitik*, as well as the conditions and guiding principles to be followed at the start of actual dialogue, was elaborated by the Secretariat for Non-Believers in *Dialogue with Non-Believers*, issued on August 28, 1968. Signed by President Cardinal Franz König and Secretary Vincenzo Miano, the document distinguished three stages of dialogue: it designated "encounter on the plane of simple human relations" as the precondition for dialogue "on the plane of action" and "on the plane of search for the truth."³ Because truths and values could always be found which are valid regardless of the ideological systems of the sides participating in the dialogue, the document acknowledged the legitimacy of dialogue conducted at the highest degree, on the plane of the "search for the truth," even when both sides claimed to possess the truth. Regarding Marxism it considered it a unique difficulty that in this system of thought an intimate connection prevailed between theory and practice. As a consequence,

dialogue was subordinated to political goals, which fundamentally made doctrinal dialogue impossible.⁴

Despite the Holy See's reservations about engaging in doctrinal dialogue with Marxism, attempts at Christian–Marxist dialogue were initiated as early as the 1950s. Edward Huber and Gustav A. Wetter, Jesuit professors at the Gregorian University in Rome, were among the first to attempt such dialogue, while beginning in the mid-1960s new forums for dialogue appeared. The most important was the Paulus-Gesellschaft, headquartered in Munich. The society's conference, which was held in Salzburg between April 29 and May 2, 1965, was attended as yet by only Western Marxists and theologians among them, Karl Rahner and Johann Baptist Metz. However, the meetings held in Herrenchiemsee, in Bavaria (April 28–May 1, 1966), and Marienbad (Mariánské Lázně) in Czechoslovakia (April 27–30, 1967), now included some participants from the Socialist Bloc as well. Similar conferences were held by the Teilhard de Chardin Society and other organizations.⁵

The Holy See did not oppose the above meetings, though it warned that the public dialogue conducted there could not be regarded as official. Although in principle the Secretariat for Non-Believers did not rule out the possibility of official dialogue either, in practice it saw only few cases where this was feasible, for two reasons: first, because non-believers as a rule represented not a community but only themselves; and second, because there was a lack of homogeneity between the various political, social or cultural organizations taking part in the dialogue and the Church.⁶

While the Holy See spoke cautiously about the possibility of doctrinal dialogue between Christians and Marxists, it saw no obstacle to conducting dialogue in the area of practical action—based on the teachings articulated in Pope John XXIII's encyclical *Pacem in Terris* and the conciliar document *Gaudium et Spes*. The Secretariat for Non-Believers went so far as to warn that the intimate connection between theory and practice in Communist thought could lead to a blurring of the planes of dialogue, “and thus sometimes even doctrinal dialogue is transformed into practical dialogue.”⁷

In his two apostolic writings on social themes, Pope Paul VI likewise recognized the necessity of conducting dialogue on the practical plane. In the encyclical *Populorum progressio*, dated March 26, 1967, the pope called attention to the fact that the solution to the most significant social challenges of the modern era lay not in messianic promises that threatened revolution

and the rise of totalitarian ideologies but rather in an active, dialogue-based solidarity that served the improvement of all humanity. In turn, the apostolic letter *Octogesima adveniens*, dated May 14, 1971, now dealt with the possibility of substantive cooperation between Catholics and Communists. In it the pontiff called it impossible for Christians to adhere in politics to Marxist ideology, which proclaimed doctrines contrary to their faith, or the liberal ideology. Following Pope John XXIII, however, he made a distinction between ideology and the specific form of historical movement sprung from the ideology. He further acknowledged that the socialist movements pursued a number of aims with which the Christian could also identify. At the same time, the pope cautioned against idealizing slogans abounding in generalities (justice, solidarity and equality), and he warned in the cases of both socialist movements as well as the concrete manifestations of Marxism: "It would be illusory and dangerous to reach a point of forgetting the intimate link which radically binds them together, to accept the elements of Marxist analysis without recognizing their relationships with ideology, and to enter into the practice of class struggle and its Marxist interpretations, while failing to note the kind of totalitarian and violent society to which this process leads."⁸

At the same time that it pressed for practical dialogue the Holy See, citing the rightful autonomy of the secular sphere and the quite differing living conditions from place to place, did not consider it its task to specify subjects of practical dialogue or to offer proposed solutions of general validity to everyone. Paul VI emphasized only that it was not sufficient "to recall principles, state intentions, point to crying injustice and utter prophetic denunciations;" rather, "effective action" was needed.⁹

However, the Holy See entrusted the local churches and individual Christians with choosing the specific areas of "dialogue on the plane of action," and it warned them only to beware of committing themselves to "collaboration without conditions and contrary to the principles of a true humanism, even in the name of a genuinely felt solidarity."¹⁰ As a basic principle to be followed in practical dialogue the only direction it gave was that the set goal of cooperation should be good, or lead to good, and not endanger "values which are more fundamental, such as integrity of doctrine and the rights of the human person (e.g., civil, cultural and religious liberty)."¹¹

1.2. THE HOLY SEE AND HUNGARY AFTER THE COUNCIL

1.2.1. *Vatican Ostpolitik after the Council*

While repeatedly emphasizing that the doctrines of Communist atheism and Christianity were incompatible, Pope Paul VI, in keeping with the Council's teachings insisted that the Church must enter into dialogue with the modern world in every area. Apart from the intention to improve the situation of the churches behind the Iron Curtain, and the acknowledgment of the balance of power in Italian domestic politics of the era, this commitment to dialogue also played an important role in Paul's decision to continue the dialogue begun with the Communist regimes during the Council.¹²

In the Holy See's dialogue with the Socialist Bloc on the political plane, the main objectives of the Vatican's eastern policy remained unchanged after the Council as well. By the second half of the 1960s, based in part on the teachings of Vatican II and the papal statements, and in part on the practice of *Ostpolitik*, it succeeded in changing the Church's image as the committed servant of western interests.¹³ Although the leaders of the socialist countries suspected the distinction between doctrinal and practical dialogue as well as the flexibility of Vatican eastern policy concealed a tactical move aimed at producing an "ideological slackening,"¹⁴ in the spirit of "peaceful co-existence" they nevertheless showed an ever greater willingness to engage in pragmatic cooperation along common interests. This willingness to cooperate manifested itself in a particularly tangible manner on March 31, 1969, when Hungary's minister to Rome officially presented to the Vatican's representative the summons by the Warsaw Pact countries, dated March 17, 1969, and thereby invited the Holy See also to the scheduled conference on European security and cooperation.¹⁵

The Vatican was aware that it owed the invitation primarily to the desire of the Soviet Union and its allies to use the Holy See's moral prestige to buttress their efforts to demonstrate only the sincerity of their commitment to peace and to broaden their economic ties in the West in order to remedy the worsening economic situation. The Holy See decided to accept the invitation nonetheless, because it judged that participating in the international conference would provide an opportunity to realize its major aims. The invitation to the conference as a full member above all strengthened the

Holy See's international position. For participation helped to clarify the Holy See's international legal status and dispel those doubts with which the Holy See's diplomatic activities had been viewed in the past. Given the unique character of the relations maintained with the other legal entities of the international community, previously many believed that the Holy See possessed merely a limited international legal status. Beyond the favorable consequences in international law, the Vatican found attendance to be politically fruitful as well. By recognizing the Holy See as a full member of the conference (even though they did not have diplomatic relations with it), the governments of the socialist countries also accepted it *de facto* as an international legal entity. And by doing so they also tacitly approved of the Holy See's assertion of its interests in international political life in accordance with the Church's unique mission.¹⁶

An important role in accepting the invitation was played furthermore by the new image of the Church and social teaching elaborated during the Second Vatican Council. Especially significant was Chapter 5 of the second part of the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, concerning the defense of peace and the strengthening of the community of peoples. Devoting particular attention to the cause and the workings of the international community and the goal of international organizations, it states: "to encourage and stimulate cooperation among men, the Church must be clearly present in the midst of the community of nations both through her official channels and through the full and sincere collaboration of all Christians—a collaboration motivated solely by the desire to be of service to all."¹⁷

Finally, the fact that the Holy See agreed with the aim of the conference, namely, that maintaining the balance of power was insufficient for preserving peace, favored acceptance of the invitation. On this basis the Vatican, which viewed the cause of peace not exclusively in the political but also in the moral and human dimensions, saw a possibility of promoting the primary aim of its eastern policy, which was to improve the situation of Christians living behind the Iron Curtain. The argument put forth by the Holy See's representative during the deliberations was grounded in Vatican II's teaching on religious freedom as set out in its declaration *Dignitatis Humanae*. Defining religious freedom, which was due to the individual and the community alike, as a basic human right grounded in the dignity of the human person enabled Vatican diplomats to speak about the human and

moral dimensions of the question of peace and security while using a legal language accepted by all sides. Thus they could argue effectively in favor of the guarantee of freedom of conscience and religion, which was also of fundamental importance to Catholics behind the Iron Curtain, as well as the intimate connection between peace and security.¹⁸

The Holy See saw to it that the seventh basic principle of the Helsinki Accords' "Decalogue," on respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, explicitly stated that freedoms "derive from the inherent dignity of the human person," that respecting them (including the freedom of thought, conscience, religion and conviction) is "an essential factor for [...] peace," and that the signatory states committed themselves to respecting the communal forms of religious practice.¹⁹ Although the document adopted at Helsinki meant a step forward in terms of providing a philosophical groundwork for human rights, with respect to the law it contained no substantial innovations compared to what had previously been codified in international treaties. In fact, it was a lower-ranking document than the latter, since it was not an international treaty but rather an agreement recognizing political obligations and did not result in an actual change in the practice of "socialist legality."²⁰

In the short term, however, the obligations assumed in the Final Act in fact placed the Holy See in a difficult position. Vatican eastern policy soon found itself facing a dilemma: if it did not support the grass-roots human rights movements emerging in the wake of the Helsinki document, it risked not finding a connection with these new forces in the political arena; if, however, it openly stood behind them, its ties to the ruling regime and the opportunity to pursue dialogue would be imperiled.²¹ Thus while Helsinki represented the zenith of the Vatican eastern policy building on the new dialogue with the Communist regime that was begun simultaneously with the announcement of the Council, at the same time it also brought to the surface the limits of the traditional Vatican diplomacy that had been typical of the period preceding Vatican II, with its use of thesis-hypothesis reasoning. At the same time, the foundations of the next period of the Vatican's eastern policy, building on Vatican II's teaching on religious freedom, also appear in Helsinki. The fact that the Holy See focused on the guarantee of religious freedom during the Helsinki conference already anticipated the new emphases of the eastern policy that would be conducted by the later pope coming from the Eastern Bloc, John Paul II.²²

1.2.2. Vatican eastern policy in Hungary

Within the framework of the eastern policy described above, relations between the Holy See and Hungary after the Second Vatican Council were defined primarily by the partial agreement of 1964. In the interests of improving the situation of the Hungarian Church the Vatican made a continuous effort to settle the questions that the agreement left open, but it failed to achieve serious results.

A resolution to the Mindszenty affair could be reached only because the Holy See, which treated the replenishing of the hierarchy as a priority, in the end essentially accepted the Hungarian government's demands.²³ The Hungarian negotiators from the outset firmly rejected authorizing the banned religious orders to function. Due to the lack of reliable information and background knowledge, the Holy See could not obtain a remedy for the grievances afflicting the Church or secure the Church's freedom to operate in fact.²⁴ Since the Hungarian government was willing at most to assume political obligations that were difficult to verify without offering legal guarantees, the Holy See regarded the strengthening of the Hungarian Church and monitoring its actual situation as its most important task.

In the internal strengthening of the Hungarian Church the largest role fell to the bishops. This followed only partly from the fact that after Vatican II, following the elaboration of a new ecclesiological model and the doctrine of episcopal collegiality, the role of the local churches and the bishops heading them had been enhanced. In the case of Hungary, the fact that the Holy See gave only theoretical guidance for pursuing the practical dialogue begun under the Council's teaching with the modern world—in this case, with the Communist regime—increased the bishops' role. The choice of practice deemed necessary in the given situation it left to the local churches.²⁵

As a consequence of the bishops' increased role, it was even more crucial for Rome to succeed in appointing suitable persons to head the vacant dioceses. Nevertheless, the procedure for this as defined in the 1964 partial agreement significantly narrowed the Holy See's room to maneuver. For by recognizing *de facto* the state's right to have a say in the matter, even in the best case scenario Rome could manage to appoint only a compromise candidate. Amidst the given possibilities the Holy See for this reason strove to nominate persons who had not previously clashed with the government

but who at the same time were also deemed reliable from an ecclesiastical standpoint.²⁶

Aside from appointing the most acceptable persons, the Holy See attempted to reinforce the Hungarian church leadership's allegiance to Rome by maintaining regular contacts. After the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council, the consultations of the central organs set up to enforce the conciliar decrees presented a possibility to do this. Sándor Kovács, for example, was a member of the Liturgical Council, established in the spring of 1964 to implement the liturgical constitution, and regularly attended its gatherings in Rome.²⁷ The Synod of Bishops, established in the *motu proprio Apostolica sollicitudo* (September 15, 1965), held its first ordinary general assembly between September 30 and October 29, 1967, to which the Hungarian episcopal conference delegated Pál Brezanóczy; the chairman of the Bishop's Conference, Archbishop József Ijjas of Kalocsa, attended the extraordinary session *ex officio* between October 11 and 28, 1969.²⁸ Ijjas represented the Hungarian bishops on the Council of the Laity (*Consilium de laicis*), established in the *motu proprio Catholicam Christi Ecclesiam* (January 6, 1967),²⁹ while József Bánk represented the Hungarian bishops on the Commission for the Revision of the Code of Canon Law.³⁰ Ijjas was likewise nominated by the Hungarian episcopate in 1967 as a member of the Congregation for Seminaries.³¹ In 1968 Miklós Dudás was appointed a member of the Congregation for the Oriental Churches—the first Hungarian bishop in this post.³² An additional framework for maintaining regular contact between the Hungarian Church and the Holy See, and the world Church was provided by the conferences of representatives of the European episcopates,³³ as well as the involvement of Hungarian theologians in the work of the Roman dicasteries.³⁴

In keeping with the practice employed at Vatican II, the Holy See utilized the Hungarian members appointed to these various central organs during their regular visits to Rome not just to obtain fresh information about the situation of the Hungarian Church but also to guide and strengthen the visiting prelates. According to the state's assessment this goal—at least in part—succeeded: "The stays and discussions in Rome of Bishops Brezanóczy, and later Sándor Kovács, József Bánk, József Ijjas have strengthened the ties between the church leaders and Rome. The repeated contact with the Vatican has not disappeared without a trace, it has caused temporary difficulties and confusion. In certain questions the returned church leaders have become

more combative, and they have raised certain topics—which until now they haven’t brought up—as issues for discussion. Thus, they have submitted a petition on religious education, there have been debates about the interpretation of Legal Edict No. 22 of 1957, etc.”³⁵

While their regular visits to Rome proved to be suitable occasions for strengthening the Hungarian prelates, the Vatican was also aware that a full-scale and objective briefing on the true situation of the Hungarian Church could not be expected from the bishops who had obtained permission to travel abroad, were appointed through compromise and defended their loyalty to the state. Therefore, beginning in 1962 the Holy See sought a way of creating the possibility of regularly obtaining information on site. After the idea of sending an apostolic visitor was rebuffed, a plan to establish unofficial consular or similar relations was raised. Casaroli had suggested this as a personal opinion already in his first discussion with the government’s representatives, but he returned to the question once more only following the signing of the partial agreement, on April 21, 1965.³⁶ From this time on the Holy See constantly kept the matter on the agenda, whereas the Hungarian side, after initially giving stalling replies, made it obvious that it did not support establishing semi-official relations. Casaroli was correct in his assessment of the reason behind the Hungarian refusal: the appraisal of the government in Budapest was that establishing such relations would favor first and foremost the Vatican and the political benefits in the international sphere would not outweigh the risks it would entail for domestic politics.³⁷ The Holy See succeeded only in securing permission for the personnel of the Secretariat of State during their trips to Hungary (within strictly controlled bounds) to make contact with a few representatives of the Hungarian Church. Between March 4 and 15, 1967, for example, Counselor of Nunciature Luigi Bongianino, was allowed to visit one by one the majority of dioceses in Hungary and gather information for the episcopal nominations. In September 1969 Mgr. Giovanni Cheli visited Hungary.³⁸

Despite the obvious limitations and difficulties, the Holy See showed itself to be satisfied with the achievements and the situation of the Hungarian Church. That it succeeded as much as possible in restoring and reinforcing the Hungarian hierarchy by 1969 was evaluated as a particularly positive development. In the given situation the Hungarian bishops’ willingness to cooperate with the state was considered acceptable, and it was demanded

only that they not yield in questions of principle and strive to achieve if possible the freedom of church government.³⁹ Casaroli once again underscored that the results achieved were “modest,” and not devoid of problems. At the same time, however, he thought that despite this there was not sufficient cause to deviate from the “undoubtedly uncertain path,” along which obstacles, indeed, even retreat, could be expected subsequently as well, but which nevertheless must be traveled to the end “with a view of the long term.”⁴⁰ Paul VI’s apostolic letter to Hungarian Catholics in August 1970, on the occasion of the millennium of Hungarian Christianity, also reflected acceptance of the results of the eastern policy and the *status quo*. In it the pope made mention not of the difficulties but rather encouraged them, while preserving their unique Christian conviction, to act in the spirit of cooperation for the improvement of the temporal state.⁴¹

Notes

- ¹ Pope John XXIII set up the Secretariat for Christian Unity in the *motu proprio Superno Dei nutu* on June 5, 1960. Cf. *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 52 (1960): 433–37. The Secretariat for Non-Christians was set up by Pope Paul VI in the apostolic letter *Progreidente Concilio*, dated May 19, 1964: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 56 (1964): 560.
- ² The new secretariat was set up by Pope Paul VI without a charter. He mentions the Secretariat for Non-Believers in an official document for the first time on January 3, 1966, in the *motu proprio Finis Concilio*, *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 58 (1966): 37–40. The new secretariat obtained its permanent legal status only in the wake of the reform of the Curia in 1967. In the constitution *Regimini Ecclesiae universae* Paul VI designated the study of atheism and dialogue with non-believers sincerely open to dialogue as the tasks of the secretariat: *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 59 (1967): 885–928, No. 101–102. On the circumstances surrounding the founding of the Secretariat for Non-Believers, see: Del Re, *Curia Romana*, 277, note 5; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. IV, 608–12; and Turbanti, “Problema del comunismo,” 169.
- ³ “Dialogus cum non credentibus” (August 28, 1968), No. 627–28, published in: *Enchiridion Vaticanum* 3, 322–49.
- ⁴ “Dialogus cum non credentibus” (August 28, 1968), No. 632, 637.
- ⁵ Hürten, “Was heißt Vatikanische Ostpolitik?” 14; Luxmoore and Babiuch, *Vatican and the Red Flag*, 157–158. For a good compilation of the arenas of dialogue, see Cooperation of believers and non-believers: the Marxist–Christian dialogue. 1966. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–c. 12. d. 01./9. t. The organizations taking part in dialogue are described in detail in: Dr. Elemér Kocsis, *A marxista–keresztény dialógus történeti áttekintése és eredményei* [History and results of Marxist–Christian dialogue], 1967. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–c. 12. d. 01./16. t.
- ⁶ “Dialogus cum non credentibus” (August 28, 1968), No. 653. Until late 1970 one single official dialogue had taken place. At the invitation of the chairman of the International Humanist and Ethical Union, in July 1966 Vincenzo Miano took part in the humanist congress in Paris; later, his deputy, Mgr. Antonio Grumelli,

attended the 1969 congress in Hannover. Cf. “Das Vatikanische Sekretariat für die Nichtgläubenden. Versuch einer Bilanz nach sechs Jahren,” *Herder Korrespondenz* 25 (1971): 320.

- ⁷ “Dialogus cum non credentibus” (August 28, 1968), No. 637.
- ⁸ Paulus PP. VI, “Epistula apostolica *Octogesima adveniens* octogesimo expleto anno ab editis Litteris Encyclicis e verbis appellatis ‘Rerum Novarum,’” (May 14, 1971.) *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 63 (1971): 401–441. No. 34. For the English version see: http://w2.vatican.va/content/paul-vi/en/apost_letters/documents/hf_p-vi_apl_19710514_octogesima-adveniens.html. Accessed July 23, 2015.
- ⁹ *Octogesima adveniens*, No. 48.
- ¹⁰ *Octogesima adveniens*, No. 49.
- ¹¹ “Dialogus cum non credentibus” (August 28, 1968), No. 640.
- ¹² Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 86–87.
- ¹³ Melloni, “Politica internazionale,” 11.
- ¹⁴ Report on the Warsaw conference of the heads the socialist countries’ offices for church affairs. Budapest, October 9, 1967. MNL-OL XIX–A–21–e. 7. t. 0046–5/g/1967, 5. Cf. Rocucci: “Concilio Vaticano II,” 253–55.
- ¹⁵ The preparatory process for the Helsinki Conference is summarized by: Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 325–32.
- ¹⁶ The aspects of the strengthening of the Holy See’s international position are analyzed in depth by: Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 340–48.
- ¹⁷ *Gaudium et Spes*, No. 89. Cf. Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 339.
- ¹⁸ The train of thought of the Vatican representatives’ arguments is summarized by Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 353–54.
- ¹⁹ Cf. Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 370–71.
- ²⁰ Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 372–73; Luxmoore and Babiuch, *Vatican and the Red Flag*, 171.
- ²¹ Hürten, “Was heißt Vatikanische Ostpolitik?” 12–13.
- ²² Cf. The information of the Interior Ministry’s Division III/I from late 1982: “Pope John Paul II wishes to take a tougher stance than hitherto in the socialist countries on the issue of the protection of religious and political liberties [...] According to the pope the Church must become a forum where all those whom the state persecutes for religious or political reasons find support. [...] The Vatican leadership pointed out to the ecclesiastics that in their arguments they should refer to the Helsinki Final Act.” Memorandum on the Vatican’s comportement vis-à-vis the socialist countries. Budapest, December 17, 1982. ÁBTL 3.2.5. O–8–552/11. “Nérók,” 108. Cf. also: Rocucci: “Concilio Vaticano II,” 265.

- ²³ Cf. Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 44–47; Adriányi, *Ostpolitik*, 64–84; Balogh, “1971. szeptember 9-ei,” 874–930.
- ²⁴ Cf. the documents relating to the bilateral talks following the 1964 agreement, in Barberini, *La politica*, 172–88, 193–205; and Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, document nos. 74–78, 92, 113–16 and 132.
- ²⁵ Cf. Above, Part III, Section 1.1.
- ²⁶ Cf. “Relazione di Mons. Casaroli al Card. Segretario di Stato sulle provviste vescovili in Ungheria (con 4 allegati), 24 aprile 1964,” in Barberini, *La politica*, 147.
- ²⁷ On the setting up of the *Consilium ad exsequendam constitutionem de sacra liturgia*, see *History of Vatican II*, Vol. III, 472; *History of Vatican II*, Vol. V, 553–554. Cf. also: Participation of Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely at the meeting of the liturgical council. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-2-79/1966; Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*, 405–406.
- ²⁸ Meeting of the Bishop’s Conference held on March 30, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-13a-1/c/1967. 22–23.; Meeting of the Bishop’s Conference held on December 9, 1969. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-13a-1/c/1969, 14–15.
- ²⁹ Del Re, *Curia Romana*, 245; Meeting of the Bishop’s Conference held on May 31, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-13a-1/e/1967. 42.
- ³⁰ Meeting of the Bishop’s Conference held on March 14–15, 1968. MKPK Irattára, Eppi Hung. 1103/1968. 5.
- ³¹ Meeting of the Bishop’s Conference held on December 6, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-13a-1/h/1967, 65.
- ³² Meeting of the Bishop’s Conference held on March 14–15, 1968. MKPK Irattára, Eppi Hung. 1103/1968. 4; “Diarium Romanae Curiae,” *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 60 (1968): 235.
- ³³ József Ijjas and Pál Brezanóczy attended both the symposium of representatives of European Bishops’ Conferences held in Noordwijkerhout, Netherlands, between July 10 and 13, 1967, and the conference held in Chur between July 7 and 10, 1969. Proposal for the Politburo on the participation of the delegates of the Hungarian Catholic Bishop’s Conference at the Council of the European Episcopal Conferences. February 7, 1967. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1967/1. ő. e. 46–47; Meeting of the Bishop’s Conference held on September 17, 1969. VPKL. I.1.n. 3341/1969. 1–2. The more important documents of the symposia can be found in: Consiglio delle Conferenze Episcopali d’Europa, *Vescovi d’Europa*.
- ³⁴ In 1967, for example, András Szennay, a professor at the Theological Academy, was delegated to the Secretariat for Non-Believers as an expert, while in 1968 Professors Ferenc Gál and Polikárp Radó were recommended by the Hungarian Catholic Bishop’s Conference for the theologians’ commission to be set up alongside the

Congregation for the Doctrine of the Faith. Cf. Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on May 31, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-13a-1/e/1967. 42; Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on June 19, 1968. VPKL I.1.n. 2126/68. 2.

- ³⁵ Report on the Church-state relations and the work of the ÁEH. March 13, 1967. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1967/9. ő. e. 18.
- ³⁶ Report prepared for the Politburo by the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda and the ÁEH on the negotiations with Agostino Casaroli. May 10, 1963, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 115; Report of the Foreign Ministry on the conversations of the minister to Rome with Casaroli. April 21, 1965. MNL-OL MK-S 288. f. 22. cs. 1965/1. ő. e. 41-43; Report of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on the Hungarian-Vatican negotiations. July 9, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 273-74.
- ³⁷ Report of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on the negotiations with the Vatican. January 31, 1967, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 303-304.; Report of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on the negotiations with the Vatican. November 18, 1968, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 384; Casaroli, *Martirio della pazienza*, 94.; Memorandum on the relations between the Hungarian People's Republic and the Vatican. Budapest, November 13, 1972. ÁBTL 3.2.5. O-8-552/12. "Nérók," 54-55.
- ³⁸ Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on March 30, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-13a-1/c/1967. 20-21.; Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on September 17, 1969. VPKL I.1.n. 3341/1969. 2. Cf. Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 38. 306-307, 396-401.
- ³⁹ Barberini, *Ostpolitik*, 202-204.; Memorandum on the situation of the Vatican. Budapest, October 2, 1972. ÁBTL 3.2.5. O-8-552/12. "Nérók," 49-50.
- ⁴⁰ "Conferenza all'Istituto di studi di politica internazionale," (Milan, January 20, 1972) Casaroli, *Nella Chiesa*, 274.
- ⁴¹ Paulus PP. VI, "Litterae apostolicae *Sancti Stephani ortum*" (Rome, August 6, 1970), *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 62 (1970): 577-87.

2. The Hungarian People's Republic

2.1. POLITICAL APPRAISAL OF THE SECOND VATICAN COUNCIL

Vatican II did not bring about a significant change in the Communist parties' image of the Church: they continued to regard the Holy See as a center of power that did not simply oppose Communism in the ideological sphere, but conducted first and foremost a political struggle against it. As a consequence, they saw in every activity of the Catholic Church, interpreted as a political formation, the intention to strengthen its positions of power.

In this interpretative framework, those in charge of ecclesiastical policy in the countries of the Socialist Bloc did not view the Second Vatican Council as an internal ecclesiastical event either, but rather appraised it as an essential component of the Holy See's eastern policy. They considered the changes taking place in the Church's profile and teachings in the wake of the conciliar decrees (in particular its attitude towards the state and religious freedom) as part of a comprehensive political plan. In their view, the goal of conciliar *aggiornamento* and the change visible in the Holy See's policy was that in the new social and political situation, under the changed forms of civilization the Church both wished to strengthen its position and wanted to break away from the capitalist world, so that, acting as a factor above states, it could launch a more effective attack against the socialist countries.¹

The leaders of ecclesiastical policy in the Socialist Bloc countries believed that behind the Holy See's willingness to engage in dialogue and seemingly conciliatory policy a strategy could be detected which sought, while exploiting antagonisms among the socialist countries, to accelerate the slow relaxation begun in each state by strengthening the local churches. According to this, the social teaching articulated at Vatican II, which in part offered a competitive response to the challenges of the era through a slow evolution and reforms, as opposed to the revolution urged by Communism,

and in part through the diplomatic dialogue begun with the socialist governments, with which they succeeded in achieving the completion of the local hierarchy and increasing the Holy See's international prestige, served to consolidate the churches of the socialist countries.²

In addition to the strengthening of the Church operating in the socialist states, they continued to look upon the ecumenical and interfaith dialogue commenced in connection with Vatican II as an initiative directed against the socialist states. They saw in both the Secretariat for Christian Unity and the Secretariat for Non-Christians, but even in the Secretariat for Non-Believers and the Pontifical Commission of Peace and Justice, forums whose goal remained the establishment of an anti-Communist ideological (and not just ideological) united front.³ To lessen the influence of the Catholic Church and prevent a potential Christian unity they continued to regard the strategy adopted in the Council's preparatory phase as valid. They considered most important taking over the initiative, increasing the activity of the Prague Christian Peace Conference and the counterbalancing of "hostile" factions in the World Council of Churches, as well as retaining the leading positions in it.⁴

At the same time, the unitary appraisal of the Vatican's political, ideological and diplomatic activities did not entail a consensus regarding the strategy to be followed vis-à-vis the Catholic Church. Although the Soviet, Polish, and East German church policy leaders recognized the positive elements to be found in the Holy See's policy, they considered cooperation possible only on the question of war and peace. Otherwise, they regarded the bilateral relations established with the Holy See dangerous. The Hungarian and Czechoslovak leaders, on the other hand, saw positive possibilities not only in supporting the Holy See's position on the issue of war and peace but also, despite the anti-Communist goals of the Holy See's eastern policy aiming to consolidate the churches in the socialist countries, in the ties established with the Vatican. According to their arguments, these contacts—regardless of the Vatican's actual intention—contributed to the "dissolution of the forces of capitalism," increased the chances of the Communist parties in the West, broadened anti-war and "anti-imperialist" solidarity, forced the Holy See to come to terms with the socialist states and, not least, attested to the recognition of the "strength of the socialist world system." Moreover, with the appropriate cooperation of the socialist governments, they considered it possible, using

these ties, to thwart the realization of the Holy See's original, anti-Communist intentions, counterbalance the potential negative effects, and influence the Vatican's political attitude and internal power relations in a positive direction, and finally strengthen socialism's international position.⁵

Just as in the question of attendance at the Second Vatican Council in 1962, in the case of the church policy to be followed after the Council, too, each of the socialist states were given a free hand in shaping its own ecclesiastical policy while keeping the adopted strategic aims in sight. The differentiated ecclesiastical policy was justified once again by the fact that the Catholic Church represented a varying weight in the various countries, and in this connection dialogue, and potential agreement, with the Holy See could have varying significance or, on the contrary, risk. This is clearly conveyed by the remarks of Pyotr Vlasovich Makartsev, deputy chairman of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults (CARC) attached to the USSR Council of Ministers, on the presentation of Aleksander Skarżyński, director of the Polish Office for Church Affairs: "As far as the second question relating to the Vatican is concerned, the Vatican's connection to the question of domestic religion, every country must shape its policy about this according to own conditions. When we resolve these issues, we must not be influenced by international politics. That is, our goal is to yield nothing of our hard-won position. [...] Our tactics may be different, but our task concerning the Vatican must be to reduce its influence on our churches, to such an extent that we teach our Catholics to live without a pope."⁶

In the countries of the Warsaw Pact, within the dialogue initiated by the Holy See the Christian-Marxist dialogue commenced following the Second Vatican Council was assessed as a peculiar means of exerting pressure on the socialist states. Like political cooperation outside the Eastern Bloc, under the conditions of capitalism, this type of dialogue was regarded as acceptable and even, from the point of view of "the Communist parties' mass political work for the sake of specific goals and tasks"⁷ an opportunity to achieve results. On the other hand, within the system, under the conditions of socialism, mainly the risks were emphasized.

Like their position on diplomatic ties, on the issue of domestic dialogue the leaders of Soviet, Polish and East German church policy likewise assumed a dismissive stance. While the Soviets argued that dialogue would

be a step backwards in the case of the Soviet Union, the Poles rejected dialogue because of its revisionist tendencies; the German leaders for their part, dismissed theoretical dialogue because of the activity of the Paulus-Gesellschaft, which they judged harmful. Although those in charge of Hungarian and Czechoslovak ecclesiastical policy acknowledged the potential dangers involved with dialogue, they urged that its theoretical and practical issues be analysed and debated thoroughly before the final decision was reached. In the end, they declared that "it is the internal affair and right of each Communist party to decide its stance on dialogue."⁸

Analyzing the question in more depth, the Hungarian church policy leadership considered neither completely rejecting dialogue nor overestimating it to be correct. It reached the conclusion that dialogue not only concealed risks but also offered positive possibilities. Taking into account Hungarian conditions, they considered the following to be the most important positives of Christian-Marxist dialogue: (1) joint action taken "for the sake of the existence and progress of humanity" helped to eliminate prejudices; (2) dialogue offered a good means of "ideologically and politically breaking down the international and domestic forces of capitalism," as long as church policy properly used the modernist currents in the churches. At the same time, in addition to the possible advantages the following major risks were anticipated: (1) the fact that a united front in the area of dialogue as well could be detected among the various denominations represented a particular danger. (2) The goal of dialogue, as proposed by the western churches was to influence the development of socialist society. (3) The acceptance of dialogue, as opposed to the ideological monopoly of dialectical materialism, essentially points towards a plurality of worldviews. (4) Engaging in dialogue might lead to a temporary increase in the prestige of the Church because the public might perceive that Marxists could not do without the Church and religion either. (5) Dialogue between Marxists and Christians promoted the mutual rapprochement of the various denominations, thereby strengthening the churches' anti-Communist united front.⁹

Nevertheless, the Hungarian church policy leadership, on the basis that inside Hungary the party's chances to "weaken the other side" were "objectively better" than the Church's chances to assert its intentions, believed the undeniable dangers could be overcome and the potential positives attained. For this reason in practice it regarded completely ignoring dialogue as

incorrect, because to do so “would invest certain representatives of the churches with the nimbus of illegality” and “would promote their amalgamation into a unitary reactionary bloc.”¹⁰ Those in charge of Hungarian church policy saw the party's ability to maintain control as the key to the favorable development of dialogue. A vital condition of this was the continuous analysis of Christian factions, which would enable them to exploit the divisions among religious forces. From a tactical standpoint they considered it important moreover that no single Christian organization be regarded as the exclusive repository of dialogue, but rather representatives of as many religious trends as possible should be involved. Thus an opportunity presented itself to support leftist, progressive groups, form “politically progressive interdenominational fronts,” and prevent the anti-Communist united front from coming into being. In the end specific political or church-policy issues were excluded from the topics for dialogue, and the importance of the theoretical debate was emphasized. The only questions considered acceptable to be placed on the agenda were practical ones in which the joint action of Christians and Marxists was useful, such as condemnation of the Vietnam War, or the consolidation of European security.

With all of these criteria taken into account, dialogue was considered an appropriate means of supporting the Hungarian government's national unity policy, of influencing believers more effectively, of “promoting the formation of groups sincerely and consciously sympathizing with socialism instead of a Christian guard loyal only in a ‘compliant’ way,” of isolating the Christian opposition and of promoting the self-criticism of the churches. Moreover, it was hoped that dialogue at home would produce a beneficial effect on the international level as well, by supporting for the “fraternal parties” in the West and neutralizing propaganda concerning the “Church of Silence.”¹¹

2.2. THE RECEPTION OF THE COUNCIL BY THE STATE IN HUNGARY

After the conclusion of Vatican II, managing the impact of the Council (assessed as a component of the Holy See's eastern policy, which might vary in its methods but not its aims), represented a serious task for those in charge of socialist church policy. The party leadership dealt more intensively only

with questions that were deemed most significant: the development of Vatican–Hungarian relations and, the matter of Christian–Marxist dialogue. It left the determination and realization of the practical tasks that followed from putting the conciliar documents in effect to the State Office for Church Affairs, and merely formulated the basic principles to be kept in view: “the relationship between the state and the churches, and political cooperation must be further improved so that in the meantime the mass influence and strength of the churches further diminishes, while our influence increases among the masses.”¹² Thus, the reception of the Council (and its documents) by the state can be discerned first of all in the files of the ÁEH. The very first summary prepared after the Council already deemed it necessary to analyze the adopted documents, control their implementation and counterbalance those initiatives that aimed to intensify religious life.¹³

The analytical work began already while the Council was in session. The Hungarian authorities continuously evaluated reports gathered from the press or with the help of agents about the Council’s progress, as well as the conciliar working documents, which were likewise obtained via agents.¹⁴ After the fourth session they first had Vid Mihelics and Béla Saád, who had been following the events of the Council as correspondents, draft an analysis of the adopted documents.¹⁵ Following this, throughout 1966 the State Office for Church Affairs led by László Nagy also carried out an analysis of the conciliar texts. In January 1966 the 17 conciliar documents were distributed among the personnel of the ÁEH, who analyzed the texts based on criteria provided in advance. The assessments were completed by mid-May and subsequently appended with opinions by external observers. Based on the staff’s elaborations and the opponents’ observations, they next planned to prepare informational materials also in order to be able to assist the ÁEH employees stationed in the provinces in their post-conciliar work.¹⁶

The leaders of Hungarian church policy believed the three conciliar documents with political (and foreign policy) relevance (namely the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes*, the declaration *Dignitatis Humanae*, and the decree *Unitatis Redintegratio*) to be the most significant. *Gaudium et Spes*, which placed the relationship of the Church and the modern world on new foundations, was the document surrounded by the greatest interest. It was regarded as positive above all for its omission of the condemnation of Communism, its urging of social justice, as well as its stance on the issue of

peace and war, though—as we have seen—the dialogue urged by the constitution confronted the socialist governments with a serious task. In keeping with the Hungarian position on diplomatic and theoretical dialogue (described above), when it came to putting the principles of the document into effect in Hungary, the leaders of ecclesiastical policy likewise saw its primary task as strengthening the “progressive” trend everywhere within the Church while highlighting its positive aspects from the regime’s point of view. Among other things they determined that “the constitution is very suitable for progressive forces in their social and political activity to use the Council’s positions.” Moreover, implementation of the government’s intentions could be based on the fact that the Hungarian Catholic bishops could find justification for their loyal, cooperative attitude in the document’s teachings.¹⁷

The ÁEH judged the Council’s declaration on religious freedom to be even more dangerous than the constitution *Gaudium et Spes*. The main danger was seen in the fact that the interpretation of religious freedom expounded in the declaration “opened a door to an anti-Communist-tinged solidarity, by proclaiming human freedoms and the defense of religion.”¹⁸ Regarding the declaration it was therefore considered important to state that the churches alone should not be allowed to explain the document, because then “inevitably misunderstandings and tensions will arise, especially in the lower organs of our state life.”¹⁹

Those guiding ecclesiastical policy classified the decree on ecumenism among the most significant conciliar documents because behind ecumenism—beginning with the announcement of the Council—they assumed the existence of social and political aims. Namely, that the genuine purpose of the aspirations for unity was the formation of unified action by the Christian denominations against atheism. Despite this—even if not in the specific wording of the text—aspirations and antagonisms were discovered in the ecumenical movement which socialist ecclesiastical policy could exploit. With a suitable policy, one relying first and foremost on “progressive” ecclesiastics, it was presumed that the ecumenical forums could feature topics that offered an opportunity to criticize the capitalist system and the western world. And to avoid the negative effects of the ecumenical movement, they believed it most important strictly to observe the ÁEH’s principle of not allowing grassroots ecumenical initiatives (for example, organizing

an ecumenical prayer week) and only permitting joint events after prior consultation with loyal church leaders. Finally, to thwart the undesirable unity, they considered it expedient to exploit the differences in Catholic and Protestant theological teaching.²⁰

Apart from the three conciliar documents it regarded as the most important, the ÁEH analyzed the other documents as well. It assessed the primary goal of *Lumen Gentium*, the Dogmatic Constitution on the Church, to be the reinforcement of the inner unity of the Catholic Church and with this the increase of religious life. Under conditions in Hungary they considered it especially noteworthy on the one hand that as a consequence of the communion ecclesiology expounded in the document the lay believers might receive a greater role in the Church, and on the other hand that the teaching on episcopal collegiality brought with it a kind of decentralization of the Church and an enhancement of the bishops' role. The latter was considered beneficial because it could result in "better assertion" of "the national particularities" (in the final analysis, the Hungarian model of church policy). Determination of the specific tasks related to the constitution *Lumen Gentium* nevertheless was postponed until later, after the new code of canon law that was being elaborated on the theoretical bases set out in the document was completed.²¹ Specific tasks were formulated more in connection with the conciliar documents explaining the various details of the document on the Church.

The State Office for Church Affairs saw the strengthening of religious life as the main goal of *Sacrosanctum Concilium*, the Constitution on the Sacred Liturgy. It was determined that the changes introduced mirrored the change in the composition of society, because the Church in this way wanted to draw closer to the faithful. The use of the vernacular languages and the urging of more active participation by the faithful were appraised as new means of strengthening conscious religiosity and religious life, and the reason seen for introducing the *altare versus populum* ("altar facing the people") was so that the priests could thus exert a greater influence on the faithful.²² The studies analyzing *Sacrosanctum Concilium* however, did not consider it necessary to prevent the innovations adopted at the Council from being introduced in Hungary. Instead, they emphasized the intensification of the party's ideological educational work, among other things, to extend and popularize the introduction of societal rituals that had been under way for years.²³

Among the provisions of the Decree on the Bishops' Pastoral Office in the Church, *Christus Dominus*, it was above all regulating the functioning of the bishops' conferences that preoccupied the leaders of ecclesiastical policy. In this question the primary goal was to ensure that the by-laws of the bishops' conference also included a reference to the 1964 agreement and that the resolutions of the Bench of Bishops be implementable not only with the Holy See's approval. Although with respect to the first question Casaroli voiced his concerns to those bishops who attended the final council session,²⁴ in the end the Holy See still approved the by-laws with its second article stating that the goal of the bishops' conference was to "thoroughly and conscientiously discuss questions affecting the Catholic Church in Hungary—in special cases the individual dioceses—according to the laws of the Catholic Church and the constitution of the Hungarian People's Republic, as well as the agreements between the Catholic Church and the Hungarian Government."²⁵ Finally, the administrators of Hungarian ecclesiastical policy were glad to note that the statute was based on the evolved practice of the legal relationship between state and Church and thus conformed to the goals of domestic church policy.

The chief danger seen in *Christus Dominus* was that it called on the bishops to foster an intensive religious life. In order to offset this, they opposed, for example, establishing a pastoral commission urged by the document, pointing out that the existing dean's conferences, crown assemblies and priestly retreats adequately substituted the work of such a body.²⁶ Even if not directly, this state intention likewise must have contributed to the Hungarian episcopate's decision to postpone the issue of setting up pastoral commissions until the time following the meeting of European bishops' conferences in the Netherlands dealing with the question.²⁷ The bishops then made it *ad acta* by arguing that without involving the laity sufficiently such bodies could not be established.²⁸ Regardless of the question of setting up pastoral councils, the State Office for Church Affairs deemed it necessary to prepare, jointly with the Ministry of Culture and the council organs, for the expected active engagement of priests among parents and children and strengthening of Christian education within the family in the wake of the decree *Christus Dominus*. To counterbalance the potential increase in religious life, the ideological educational work of teachers was to be intensified, and indeed, the parents also must be given a stake in this process somehow.²⁹

The conciliar documents on priestly formation, Christian education and the means of mass communication were also of interest to the leaders of church policy because of the issue of youth education, of key importance with regard to the future. To prevent the implementation of the conciliar decrees involving unfavorable consequences from the state's point of view, controlling the reform of priestly education could offer the best possibility. The ÁEH therefore sought to carry out the renewal of theological education under the guidance of the theological commission of the peace movement. Thus they considered it feasible, under the pretext of changes preparing for the challenges of the local culture, according to the intentions of the decree, to introduce political economy and constitutional law in the theological academies also, as well as hold political lectures, and from the third year oblige the students to regularly attend the lectures of the peace priest movement. Through the peace priest movement they would have liked also to ensure that the new operating rules provided greater freedom to seminarians. They believed that with the help of television programs, movies and theater performances their worldview would evolve in the appropriate direction. In addition, to establish the loyalty of future priests they sought to have the "politically most suitable" theology professors write uniform theological textbooks which wrote up the Council's teachings in a way that conformed to the state's interests. Finally, the established practice of assigning new mass priests alongside peace priests for the sake of maintaining their influence was judged as something to be maintained.³⁰

The greatest danger the leaders of Hungarian church policy saw in the conciliar Declaration on Christian Education, *Gravissimum educationis*, was that the Church was seeking to have a formative influence on society by bringing up an adequately prepared lay elite. Since in the case of Hungary the only possibility of doing this in a legal manner was in Catholic schools, they saw it necessary to prepare in advance for initiatives which tried to achieve this same goal outside of school, as part of legal religious education or illegal means (excursions, etc.).³¹ To preempt unfavorable processes they recommended monitoring the activity of Catholic secondary schools in tandem with the Ministry of Culture, observing the legal framework for dealing with youth, liquidating illegal youth groups by the authorities, they further recommended that the peace priest movement unmask "reactionary" attempts to use youth for political aims.³²

The State Office for Church Affairs regarded the conciliar Decree on the Instruments of Social Communication, *Inter Mirifica*, dangerous not so much because of the risk of influence on shaping public opinion, since control of the (ecclesiastical) press was properly ensured. In the case of this decree, too, the more significant objections were connected to religious education. Whereas the leaders of church policy judged the use of technology by priests in pastoral work as something to be prevented because of an increase in religious life, they sought to ban the radio clubs operating in Catholic gymnasia because they were seen as the illegal recruiting ground for Catholic journalists.³³

In addition to the issue of youth education, those in charge of Hungarian church policy also displayed marked attention to the Decree on the Apostolate of the Laity, *Apostolicam Actuositatem*. The ÁEH expected the episcopate would seek to implement the provisions of this conciliar document by reforming the activity of *Actio Catholica* and broadening its diocesan organizations. To counter this presumed intention, they stated that there was no need to establish any new institutions or change the framework of religious life. Indeed, they also wished to suppress gradually the initiatives launched by the lower clergy. In this case, too, they wanted to control the implementation of the decree first of all through the peace priest movement, though they planned on using the Protestant churches as well. First and foremost it was recommended that the leaders of the peace movement highlight those topics in the decree which represented no risk to the regime, including, for instance, the cultivation of a work ethic, exemplary family life, increased respect for communal property, socialist patriotism, the proper selection of church employees, and finally the proper care of ecclesiastical objects. And should the Bench of Bishops truly want to increase the activity of *Actio Catholica*, it was considered important to reinforce the organization's existing leaderships and prevent the employment of "reactionary priests."³⁴

In evaluating the conciliar Decree on the Appropriate Renewal of the Religious Life, *Perfectae Caritatis*, the leaders of Hungarian church policy took as their starting point the fact that in the period since permission for the orders to operate was withdrawn they had succeeded in rigorously curtailing the influence of religious orders on society. Yet, the document was still not viewed as completely devoid of interest, because four orders

maintaining schools were still permitted to operate, while the members of the disbanded orders continuously strove to practice their calling. In addition, the Holy See had not given up trying to have the orders restored either. Thus, to prevent the undesirable enforcement of this conciliar document they highlighted first and foremost the importance of observing Hungarian state laws and the 1950 agreement. Beyond this, they aimed to eliminate the elite character of the legally operating orders within the Church “by more favorably shaping their political stratification,” and sought to involve them more intensively in the work of the peace priest movement. Furthermore, they wanted to enforce the practice of keeping the legally functioning orders separate from the banned religious orders. Finally, for the further specific steps they considered it necessary to examine the activities of the legal and illegal orders jointly with the Interior Ministry’s organs by taking into account the Council’s provisions.³⁵

It was of decisive importance in the assessment of the socialist church-policy leadership that the conciliar Decree on the Church’s Missionary Activity, *Ad Gentes*, understood mission as the ideological means of mobilizing the Church. No essential novelty was detected in the decree compared with the Church’s previous practice, and the conclusion was drawn merely that the document was more concerned with saving the Church’s inner forces than missionary work. Because of this, and because there was no realistic possibility of legal missionary activity in contemporary Hungary, it was expected that the decree could be enforced at most in illegally operating ecclesiastical circles (e.g., among the banned religious orders). Nonetheless, with suitable state monitoring and propaganda work they believed the potential dangers could be prevented or even countered. For this reason, being able to recognize activity of this kind in practice was made the primary task of the state authorities.³⁶

The conciliar documents dealing respectively with the Catholic Church’s relationship to non-Christian religions and the Eastern Catholic Churches were regarded as interesting primarily from an international perspective (the Catholic Church’s presumed attempt to penetrate into the Third World) and from the standpoint of strivings for anti-Communist unity. In this area they did not see much to be done in the Hungarian context. Nevertheless, in the case of *Nostra Aetate* they believed it necessary to monitor the workings of the Secretariat for Non-Christians. At the same time, at home they regarded

it necessary to map the Jewish community's stance on the document precisely, follow the development of grassroots Catholic–Jewish relations more closely, and work out a plan detailing how the conciliar condemnation of anti-Semitism could be utilized for political ends (and church policy).³⁷ The conciliar decree *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*, describing the relationship of the Roman and Eastern Catholic Churches, was regarded as secondary in the case of Hungary. It was considered noteworthy only with respect to inciting antagonisms between the clergy of the Greek Catholic Diocese of Hajdúdorog and Bishop Miklós Dudás, as well as strengthening tensions between the Latin and Greek rites.³⁸

From the state's point of view, among the conciliar documents the Dogmatic Constitution on Divine Revelation, *Dei Verbum*, and the Decree on the Ministry and Life of Priests, *Presbyterorum Ordinis*, were regarded as completely lacking interest. Although an assessment of *Dei Verbum* was drafted at the State Office for Church Affairs, compiling informational materials was thought to be superfluous because of its expressly religious theme.³⁹ For its part, *Presbyterorum Ordinis* was not judged to be especially dangerous since it made excessive demands of priests. These requirements under Hungarian conditions were viewed as already obsolete. As for the second part, they did not fear its implementation because in their opinion "its realization among the Hungarian Catholic clergy would not elicit unanimous enthusiasm."⁴⁰

Even though the experiences extracted from the above-described analyses obviously had an impact on party resolutions on the situation and tasks of church policy,⁴¹ the primary aim of the drafted materials was to offer practical assistance to the employees of the State Office for Church Affairs when seeking to enforce the fundamental principles of church policy on a daily basis.

On the basis of the tasks defined in the Politburo's resolution and drawn up with regard to each conciliar document, it may be stated that those in charge of Hungarian church policy sought to influence the ecclesiastical reception of the Second Vatican Council's teachings according to its interests first and foremost by controlling how the conciliar documents were presented. This they achieved partly by designating the presenter (e.g., "politically reliable" theology teachers, journalists, peace priests), and partly by selectively presenting the topics and limiting the audience as much as

possible. The primary criterion in selecting the topics was to have the ecclesiastical press and the official priestly deliberations focus on those council decrees (and those parts of the decrees) which were politically harmless or happened to serve political cooperation (also). As an example of this we may cite not only the one-sided emphasis of the “progressive” teaching of the constitution *Gaudium et Spes* concerning the cause of peace, the social question, or the relationship between Church and state, but also the following assessment attached to the conciliar decree on the bishops’ pastoral service performed in the Church: “In the future the spirit of the Decree must be better used in given cases in church support of moral issues. Such is the problem of births or the question of peace, and the civil liberties of other peoples in the face of imperialist ambitions.”⁴² Finally, the fact that for a long time the translation of the conciliar documents were allowed to appear only separately in small print-runs served to limit the audience.⁴³ In fact all of the conciliar documents would only become widely familiar to Hungarian Catholic society after 1975, when the Saint Stephen Society published the volume *The Teachings of the Second Vatican Council (A II. Vatikáni Zsinat tanítása)* in a print-run of 7,000 copies.⁴⁴

Monitoring the Council’s principles represented the other important factor in influencing the ecclesiastical reception of the Council. It aided the practice of state control to a great extent that the management of implementing the Council fell essentially to the episcopate. Thus, on most questions it was sufficient to keep the activity of the Bishop’s Conference, and/or certain bishops under surveillance.⁴⁵ The authorities thought that controlling a central ecclesiastical organ directing the implementation of the Council would be the easiest solution. Temporarily, however, the plan was also raised for the leaders of church policy to authorize, or even push for indirectly, the holding of diocesan or plenary synods, as in West European countries, in Hungary also. In the end the plan for convening synodal meetings was rejected, among other reasons, because the episcopal conference, with its legally settled status, was viewed as an institution that took the place of a national or plenary synod.⁴⁶

The gradually transforming composition of the episcopate in the wake of the Vatican–Hungarian partial agreement most often made direct state intervention truly superfluous. This is clearly illustrated by a memorandum assessing the episcopal conference in March 1973. According to this, at the meeting the clash between the “progressive-thinking bishops” and the

“conservative forces within the episcopate” ended with the “progressives” emerging victorious: “As a consequence of this the opposition wing has become isolated—pushed back for the time being—and the conference assumed positions conforming to our ambitions for church policy.”⁴⁷ At this conference the bishops discussed, among other things, the question of introducing the permanent diaconate. József Udvardy in vain argued in favor of the Bishop’s Conference deciding on the matter independently, and asking the State Office for Church Affairs only that it regard deacons as lay priests who, if they swore the oath to the state, did not need “permits to operate.” In the end, József Ijjas, the president of the Bishop’s Conference, summarized the remarks by saying that the material had to be prepared for discussion inside the ÁEH.⁴⁸

However, there also occurred cases when the intelligence coming in to the state organs prompted the leaders of church policy to intervene directly to keep the Council’s reception on a suitable track. This occurred, for instance, in the Diocese of Szombathely, where Sándor Kovács—as has been alluded to above—displayed great activity in reviving religious life following the third council session as well. The report analyzing the activities of the bishop of Szombathely is especially interesting because the handwritten remark attached to it allows us to gain a picture of the means by which the church policy leadership tried to make those chief pastors who in implementing the Council’s teachings overstepped the bounds acceptable to the state “see reason.” The memo, likely coming from Imre Miklós’s hand, reads as follows: “C[omrade] Prantner [!]. Based on the report about S[ándor] Kovács it would appear correct, if we were to speak with him personally. Either we would go down to see him with C[omrade] Herling, or he would come up. I await your kind opinion. III. 23.”⁴⁹

Notes

- ¹ Assessment of the situation after the Second Vatican Council and proposal on the common standpoint of the socialist countries. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 6. t. 0046-4/1967; Polish presentation on the new Vatican policy. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 7. t. 0046-5/d/1967; Intervention of Pyotr Vlasovich Makartsev in the discussion at the international conference. Budapest, June 26-27, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 0046-3/1967. 14. Cf. also Roccucci: "Concilio Vaticano II," 52-62.
- ² Intervention of Pyotr Vlasovich Makartsev in the discussion at the international conference. Budapest, June 26-27, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 0046-3/1967. 16; Polish presentation on the new Vatican policy. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 7. t. 0046-5/d/1967, 20-24.
- ³ Remarks of Pyotr Vlasovich Makartsev, deputy chairman of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults attached to the USSR Council of Ministers, on the presentation of Aleksander Skarżyński, director of the Polish Office for Church Affairs. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 6. t. 0046-3/1967. 29-30; Assessment of the situation after the Second Vatican Council and proposal on the common standpoint of the socialist countries. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 0046-4/1967.
- ⁴ Report on the Warsaw conference of the heads of the socialist countries' offices for church affairs. Budapest, October 9, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 7. t. 0046-5/g/1967, 2-4.
- ⁵ Assessment of the situation after the Second Vatican Council and proposal on the common standpoint of the socialist countries. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 6. t. 0046-4/1967; Report on the Warsaw conference of the heads of the socialist countries' offices for church affairs. Budapest, October 9, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 7. t. 0046-5/g/1967. 4-6. From the point of view of strengthening its international position it was an important factor that through these ties, for example, Hungary also could gain access to the Vatican's intelligence sources. See Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 48.
- ⁶ Remarks of Pyotr Vlasovich Makartsev, deputy chairman of the Council for the Affairs of Religious Cults attached to the USSR Council of Ministers, on the

- presentation of Aleksander Skarżyński, director of the Polish Office for Church Affairs. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 6. t. 0046-3/1967, 29-30.
- ⁷ Report on the Warsaw conference of the heads of the socialist countries' offices for church affairs. Budapest, October 9, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-e. 7. t. 0046-5/g/1967, 4.
 - ⁸ Ibid., 4-6.
 - ⁹ Memorandum on the practical problems of the dialogue. (Around 1967). MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 12. d. 01/3. t.
 - ¹⁰ Remarks of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on the problems of Christian-Marxist dialogue. (Before 1969) MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 12. d. 01/5, t. point III.
 - ¹¹ Ibid.
 - ¹² Resolution of the HSWP Politburo on the situation of church policy and on further tasks related to it. March 4, 1968, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 363.
 - ¹³ Report of ÁEH Chairman József Prantner for the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda on Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. December 30, 1965, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 292.
 - ¹⁴ A part of the obtained—secret—work documents of the Council see among the material of the ÁEH. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 1.20. As early as 1964 the ÁEH drafted an assessment of the obtained schemas; cf. Memorandum for Prantner. Budapest, December 7, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 27. d. 1.20/5. t. 5.
 - ¹⁵ Memorandum on the Council. January 5, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. V-37-2/1966.
 - ¹⁶ Schedule prepared on the meeting of the ÁEH employees for the elaboration of the council documents. Budapest, January 13, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 27. d. 1.20/5. t. 2; Memorandum for Prantner. Budapest, May 19, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 27. d. 1.20/5. t. 5; Memorandum for the members of the ÁEH. Budapest, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 27. d. 1.20/5. t. 8.
 - ¹⁷ Elaboration of the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes* by Jakab Herling. Budapest, April 8, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/52. t. Cf. also: Dialogue in the encyclical letter *Pacem in Terris*. 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 12. d. 01/8. t. 9.
 - ¹⁸ Elaboration of the declaration *Dignitatis Humanae* by István Straub. Budapest, July 12, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/63. t.
 - ¹⁹ Remarks of Ferenc Somos to the declaration *Dignitatis Humanae*. Budapest, March 31, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/62. t.
 - ²⁰ Information report on the Second Vatican Council drafted by ÁEH Head of Department László Nagy. Budapest, December 28, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a.

- V-37-4/1966; Elaboration of the Council's decree on ecumenism by István Straub. Budapest, March 24, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/24. t; Remarks of Vilmos Lóránt to the Council's decree on ecumenism. Budapest, September 1, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/25. t.
- ²¹ Remarks to the constitution *Lumen Gentium*. Budapest, 1966. április 12. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/13. t; Observations of Jakab Herling on the elaboration on the constitution *Lumen Gentium*. Budapest, August 31, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/14. t.
- ²² Report on the Church-state relations and the work of the ÁEH. March 13, 1967. MNL-OL 288. f. 22. cs. 1967/9. ő. e. 21.
- ²³ Elaboration of József Potoczky on the constitution on the liturgy. Budapest, March 22, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 27. d. 1.20/7. t; Observations of András Madai András to Potoczky's elaboration. Budapest, August 25, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 27. d. 1.20/8. t. On societal rituals see: István Horváth, "Templomból a kultúrházba," 176-96.
- ²⁴ Memorandum. Budapest, December 13, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/9-a. 503.
- ²⁵ Promulgation of the Statutes of the Bishops' Conference. MKPK Irattára. Eppi. Hung. 128/1966. Extracts of the document are published in: Gergely, *Katolikus egyház*, 182-84.
- ²⁶ Elaboration of Sándor Telepó on the decree *Christus Dominus*. Budapest, April 27, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/20. t; Observations of József Potoczky on the decree *Christus Dominus*. Budapest, July 4, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/21. t.
- ²⁷ Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on May 31, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a K-13a-1/e/1967. 36.
- ²⁸ Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on December 9-10, 1970. VPKL I.1.n. 943/1971. 4.
- ²⁹ Observations of József Potoczky on the decree *Christus Dominus*. Budapest, July 4, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/21. t.
- ³⁰ Observations of András Madai on the decree *Optatam Totius*. Budapest, March 26, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/37. t. On the peace priests' plans for the renewal of priestly formation: Vitányi, II. *Vatikáni Zsinat*, 407-410; Beresztóczy, *Katolikus békemozgalom*, 116-117. The peace priests' role in elaborating a "progressive" theology and influencing young priests is stressed further in the Resolution of the HSWP Politburo on the situation of church policy and on further tasks related to it. March 4, 1968, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 364.
- ³¹ Elaboration on the declaration on Christian education. Budapest, June 29, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/42. t.

- ³² Elaboration of József Szeifert on the Council's declaration on Christian education. Budapest, March 23, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 30. d. 1.21/25. t.
- ³³ Elaboration of László Bai on the decree *Inter Mirifica*. Budapest, March 31, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 30. d. 1.21/19. t.
- ³⁴ Observations of József Göllöncsér on the decree *Apostolicam Actuositatem*. Budapest, April 12, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 30. d. 1.21/28. t.
- ³⁵ Summary of the ÁEH on the decree *Perfectae Caritatis*. Budapest, April 1, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/27. t.
- ³⁶ Summary of the ÁEH on the decree *Ad Gentes*. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/56. t; Observations of Ferenc Somos to the elaboration of the decree *Ad Gentes*. Budapest, July 12, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/57. t.
- ³⁷ Elaboration of István Straub on the declaration *Nostra Aetate*. Budapest, March 25, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/44. t.
- ³⁸ Elaboration of Vilmos Lóránt on the decree *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*. Budapest, 1966. március 29. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/16. t; Observations of István Straub on the assessment of the decree *Orientalium Ecclesiarum*. Budapest, July 14, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/17. t.
- ³⁹ Cf. Handwritten remark of László Nagy dated November 5, on the elaboration of Gyula Szakács on the dogmatical constitution *Dei Verbum*. Kecskemét, 1966. július 11. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/48. t.
- ⁴⁰ Elaboration of Sándor Telepó on the decree *Presbyterorum Ordinis*. Budapest, 1966. szeptember 3. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/60. t.
- ⁴¹ Resolution of the HSWP Politburo on the situation of church policy and on further tasks related to it. March 4, 1968, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 356–67.
- ⁴² Observations of József Potoczky on the decree *Christus Dominus*. Budapest, July 4, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/21. t.
- ⁴³ “We agree to the Bishop's Conference gradually publishing the decrees of the Second Vatican Council in the coming years. The publications should be distributed in limited circles, only among priests as well as theologians and the personnel of theological institutes, ecclesiastical reviews and other ecclesiastical institutions, in approx. 3–4000 copies.” ÁEH Chairman József Prantner to László Orbán, head of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda. Budapest, February 10, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-1/1966.
- ⁴⁴ Cserháti and Fábíán, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat tanítása*. The volume went through two additional editions until the change of regime.
- ⁴⁵ The task of the State Office for Church Affairs was to encourage the bishops “as part of planned individual encounters” to take “progressive political action.”

Resolution of the HSWP Politburo on the situation of church policy and on further tasks related to it. March 4, 1968, in Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 364.

- ⁴⁶ József Göllöncsér, *A zsinatok történeti kialakulása* [The historical evolution of the councils] (Study) 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 27. d 1.2/1. t. 8-12; Gergely, *Katolikus egyház*, 181.
- ⁴⁷ Memorandum on the meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on March 13, 1973. Budapest, May 14, 1973. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-13a-3/1973. 17.
- ⁴⁸ Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on March 13, 1973. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-13a-3/1973. 12-13.
- ⁴⁹ Report on the activities of Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely. Budapest, March 22, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0033-3/a/1965.

3.

The Hungarian Church

3.1. LEARNING ABOUT THE COUNCIL

The Hungarian ecclesiastical reception of the Second Vatican Council began already during the sessions. Nevertheless, the fact that only some of the bishops could follow the work and debates of the Council in person influenced the reception to a significant degree. During the first session even they gained information on the proceedings of the Council primarily from the Hungarian press as well as the summaries of the Hungarian correspondents.¹ Obviously, those chief pastors who were prevented by the state from attending could learn about the council developments only second-hand. Apart from the domestic and foreign press, the latter could gain a picture of the Council's activities first of all based on the accounts given during the episcopal conferences by their colleagues who had attended, or confidential communications.²

The priests' primary source of information about the Council was likewise the Hungarian Catholic press (*Magyar Kurír*, *Új Ember*, *Vigilia* and *Katolikus Szó*), though they might receive details on a given question from their bishops as well. For example, the auxiliary bishop of Vác, Vince Kovács, gave his trusted priests a separate account of his experiences in Rome,³ while Sándor Kovács informed his priests about the Council's results during deanery conferences, crown assemblies or other kinds of retreats.⁴ The role played by these various priestly gatherings is shown also by the fact that the document on the liturgy adopted at the second session was presented to the lower clergy during the deanery conference in the fall of 1964 based on materials drafted by the Liturgical Commission.⁵

Like the priests, the faithful did not read about the Council and its results exclusively in the Catholic press either. Church-going Catholics learned about its work first and foremost from the bishops' circulars. Nevertheless,

on account of state censorship these circulars, too, could contain only elements which corresponded to the aims of the regime's church policy.⁶ The circular letter of New Year's Eve 1964, for example, of the activities of the third council session, in addition to presenting the new image of the Church elaborated in the draft document on the Church, highlighted the importance of discussing the cause of peace and the social question in the forthcoming pastoral constitution, and spoke in positive terms about the agreement between the Hungarian government and the Holy See.⁷ Some of the sermons and lectures held as part of the jubilee holy year proclaimed by Pope Paul VI after the conclusion of the Second Vatican Council likewise explicitly served the goal of familiarizing the faithful with the Council's teachings. Explanations of the conciliar decrees, for instance, were held for the faithful as part of pontifical masses celebrated in Salgótarján and Balassagyarmat.⁸ And in the Diocese of Szombathely, between March 6 and 11, 1966, Diocesan Bishop Sándor Kovács and Auxiliary Bishop József Winkler alternately held lectures with the following titles: "The Purpose of the Second Vatican Council"; "The Mystical Body of Christ"; "The Believer in the Church"; "The College of Bishops and Their Colleagues"; "Ecumenism"; "The Dignity of the Family"; "The Value of the Person"; and "The Church in the Modern World."⁹

Like the bishops' circulars, the popes' exhortatory messages addressed to Hungarian Catholics and the papal encyclicals, apostolic circular letters and other Vatican documents only reached Hungary in censored form. The difference was merely that in the case of the Vatican documents the state had no way of censoring them in advance. Thus it intervened by refusing publication or attaching a commentary modifying the meaning. As was discussed above, the State Office for Church Affairs allowed Pope John XXIII's message to Hungarian Catholics in December 1962 to be read out only with such distorting changes, for example.¹⁰ On the other hand, the Hungarian authorities, on occasion decided to ban publication of a given document, such as Paul VI's message to the Hungarian faithful at the end of the second session,¹¹ as well as those papal encyclicals or letters which contained teachings viewed as harmful from the regime's point of view. Thus, of Pope Paul VI's writings neither the encyclical *Ecclesiam Suam* nor the apostolic letter *Octogesima adveniens* appeared in Hungarian.¹²

In Hungary it was challenging not only to follow the work of Vatican II, but also to become familiar with the documents adopted by the Council.

Publication of the conciliar documents in Hungarian proceeded slowly, because in every case state permission was needed to print the translations, which were prepared at Pannonhalma.¹³ After the appearance of the translation of the constitution on the Sacred Liturgy in 1964, after the Council a handful of documents was published in Hungarian from year to year, in print-runs of 5–6,000 copies: the conciliar documents on the Church, the Apostolate of the Laity and Religious Freedom in 1966; the materials discussing ecumenism, interdenominational dialogue, and the Church in the Modern World in 1967; the documents drafted on the Oriental Catholic Churches, the Pastoral Service of the Bishops, the Training of the Clergy and Revelation in 1968; and the documents dealing with Christian education and priestly service in 1969.¹⁴ The publication in one volume of the Hungarian translation of all council documents, as we indicated above, in any case would have to wait until as late as 1975.

Nevertheless, Hungarian Catholics could obtain knowledge of the conciliar documents already prior to the publication of the native translations. Some priests soon obtained the documents in Latin or German.¹⁵ For their part inquiring believers could become informed about the content of the texts and the Council's teachings first from the detailed presentations of Vatican Radio and later on from summary works appearing in Hungary and abroad, as well as the journal *Mérleg*, edited in the West and allowed into the country by the Hungarian authorities from 1969 on.¹⁶

3.2. PRACTICAL RECEPTION

Of the two closely interconnected planes of the reception of Vatican II—practical implementation of council teachings, and their formal (theological-theoretical) reception¹⁷—it is the practical changes which took place in the organizational sphere that are more easily grasped.

The most striking changes from the point of view of Catholics' everyday life followed from the implementation of the liturgical constitution. Under the terms of the first conciliar document, which was promulgated on December 4, 1963, the task of carrying out liturgical renewal based on the guidelines of the Apostolic Holy See fell to the local bishops. To put the constitution into effect in Hungary, the Bench of Bishops at first planned to

establish an institute, then a secretariat. In the end, due to a lack of personnel and material resources, it was the National Liturgical Council (*Országos Liturgikus Tanács*), set up on February 25, 1964 as an advisory organ of the Bench of Bishops, that directed the work of liturgical reform. Beginning in 1965 the council, under the chairmanship of Sándor Kovács, building on the antecedents of liturgical renewal in Hungary carried out the reform of Holy Mass, then from 1970 on renewed the liturgy for administering the sacraments, the liturgy of canonical hours and the liturgy of sacramentals and benedictions.¹⁸

Implementation of the conciliar decree on the means of social communication, *Inter Mirifica*, promulgated together with the liturgical constitution, was not possible in Hungary. In the years following the Council the translation of the document was not published in Hungary until 1975, nor did the Hungarian Catholic Bishop's Conference, knowing the state of church policy, take steps to implement it. Even in 1970 it was the prelates' assessment that "due to our local conditions the pastoral directive dealing with the means of mass communication cannot be enforced in our country."¹⁹ The conciliar document *Inter Mirifica* would be partially implemented only in 1980, when at the March 4–5 meeting of the Hungarian Catholic Bishops' Conference they decided to establish the Office for Mass Communication (*Tömegkommunikációs Iroda*) to coordinate the activity of the Catholic press in Hungary.²⁰

In the area of ecclesiastical government, in the spirit of collegiality gaining expression in the image of the Church elaborated in the dogmatic constitution *Lumen Gentium*, in Hungary, too, certain innovations took place. First and foremost, the legal status of the episcopal conferences was clarified, something which the state had also urged, and the statute of the Hungarian Catholic Bishops' Conference was drafted. At the same time, within the Bishop's Conference a series of commissions were set up in part to coordinate centrally the everyday tasks of diocesan government and in part to carry out the conciliar reform. These latter included the Theological Commission of the Bishops' Conference, the Scriptural Commission, the National Catechetical Commission, the Seminary Commission, the Ecumenical Commission, the Episcopal Commission of the Secretariat for Non-Believers and the Commission on Justice and Peace. Among the seven councils set up alongside the Bishop's Conference, it was the National Liturgical Council, the Council of

the Laity and the Council for Families that oversaw the implementation of Council's teachings.²¹

Parallel to the establishment of the central organs (and in part prior to it), under the terms of the conciliar documents new bodies were established at the diocesan level as well. As early as 1967 Lajos Shvoy, citing the conciliar decree *Christus Dominus*, urged that the presbyteral and pastoral councils be set up according to unitary criteria countrywide. However, the Bishop's Conference postponed a decision on the issue until after the meeting of bishops' conferences in the Netherlands, because one of the topics of the symposium happened to be the establishment of presbyteral and pastoral councils. In Hungary, the presbyteral councils (called presbyteral senates) in the end were set up not on the basis of the practice introduced by the bishop of Székesfehérvár but rather the statute elaborated by Bishop József Ijjas.²²

The creation of the pastoral councils progressed more slowly than the establishment of the presbyteral senate. At the bishops' conference held in May 1967, Bishop Lajos Shvoy, who led the way in implementing the conciliar resolutions, as yet reported only on the plans for forming the council. In other dioceses, meanwhile, preparations proceeded even more slowly. Finally, in 1971, at the urging of the Sacred Congregation for the Clergy the bishops' conference determined that the parochial representative bodies filled this role in Hungary. Thus, the task could be regarded as solved, and merely the updating of the parochial statute remained to be solved. Nevertheless, the new statute, taking into account the conciliar documents and the provisions of the Code of Canon Law issued in 1983, went into force only on January 1, 1985.²³

Finally, in presenting an outline of the practical implementation of the Council, among the newly established or reformed organizational units, a word must be said about the reform of priestly formation. Disregarding the previously mentioned initiatives of the peace priest movement, the question was first placed on the agenda at the Bishops' Conference, held on May 31, 1967. Then, in the wake of the results of the First Synod of Bishops, on June 18, 1969 a three-member study commission was set up to work out a plan for the modern education and training of the priesthood.²⁴ The commission, under the leadership of the auxiliary bishop of Vác, József Vajda, elaborated the guidelines for the Hungarian reforms based on the recommendations of

the First Synod of Bishops as well as the Vatican directive *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis*, which appeared in Rome on January 6, 1970. The Hungarian bishops debated the proposed guidelines at an extraordinary conference held in August 1970.²⁵ Then on December 9, 1971, they adopted the document *Renovatio Institutionis Sacerdotalis in Seminariis Hungariae*. After the Holy See's approval was obtained, this document would become the basis for the reform of priestly training in Hungary.²⁶

3.3. THEOLOGICAL RECEPTION

The organizational framework established out of necessity based on the documents of Vatican II created only the preconditions for reception of the Council's content. In any event, it is much more difficult to grasp the impact the Council's teaching exerted on the outlook of Hungarian Catholic society than its practical consequences. An attempt to answer the question will be made by examining the agents of reception and the factors promoting reception.²⁷

In shaping the reception of the Council in Hungary, the preeminent actors (and, at the same time, agents) were the theologians, for it was first and foremost through their works that both the broader strata of the clergy and the believers were able to become more thoroughly familiar with the Council's teaching. In addition, in contemporary Hungary because of tight state controls only few (e.g., the students of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute) were presented with an opportunity to become familiar with the reception process of the Council in the West directly. In the post-conciliar search for theological solutions in Hungary, only a handful of theologians could play an essential role with the state's (at least tacit) permission.²⁸ Thus, a crucial role in making the results of the Council known in Hungary was played by the dogmatic theologian Ferenc Gál, the philosopher Tamás Nyíri, and the abbot of Pannonhalma, fundamental theologian András Szennay.²⁹

In the reception of the Council, Hungarian theologians at once had to keep in view the criteria of loyalty to the Church and the expectations of the state. This peculiar situation fundamentally determined which topics could be placed at the forefront of Hungarian theology. The reception of the Council's doctrine of *Ecclesia ad intra* did not come up against serious barriers.

Accordingly, the key elements of the dogmatic constitutions and the related documents (the theology of the people of God, the idea of the Church as mystery, the priesthood as service, the ideal of the priestly community, the renewal of scriptural studies) were built into the native theology.³⁰ At the same time, one of the peculiarities of Hungarian theology was that it did not attempt to find new paths; but rather, it tried to formulate the Church's teaching in a modern way while trying to harmonize the entirety of ecclesiastical tradition and the challenges of the modern world, keeping in mind the pastoral situation in contemporary Hungary. It was from this that the practical orientation of Hungarian theology followed, manifesting itself in the idea that "the everyday problems of believer (and non-believer) became the focus of theological inquiry, from work and rest through the phenomena of advertising and technology to the questions of family life."³¹ The other peculiar feature of Hungarian theology was its "middle-of-the-road" character. Though debates were held around issues pertaining to practical theology, significant theological conflicts did not emerge. The progressive-conservative tension characteristic of post-conciliar theology at the level of the World Church was hardly noticeable.³²

The renewal of Catholic theology stemming from Vatican II's opening *ad extra*, the turn towards the topics of this world and the search for answers to the problems of the present, appeared in the Hungarian Church also. Amidst the peculiar Hungarian conditions this meant the theologically-based grounding of the relationship between the Church and the ideologically hostile state on the one hand, and a reflection on Marxism on the other. In light of the 1964 partial agreement József Cserháti, relying on the traditional theological teaching on Church-state relations, proclaimed the necessity of cooperation being realized along with the autonomy of the two realities. Nonetheless, the expressions employed in the wording described this relationship not as the cooperation of two equal sides but reflected, so to speak, the contemporary Hungarian situation, since the demands raised by the state were shown to take precedence.³³ Following the conciliar constitution on the relationship of the Church and the modern world, *Gaudium et Spes*, as well as the utterances of the Council's popes, Hungarian theologians could not avoid taking account of the challenges of socialist society and the regime's ideology either. This meant above all else that they had to reflect in some fashion on the Marxist critique of religion. Under the

conditions of the party-state dictatorship, this meant emphasizing the points of contact between the two worldviews. However, by stating the unbridgeable theoretical conflicts Hungarian theologians also attempted to point out the limits of Christian–Marxist dialogue, though they could not evade the ideological dialogue urged by the regime as well.³⁴

Of the Catholic Church's teaching towards the modern world, however, it was not possible to make everything the subject of theology within the confines of the regime in Hungary. The Council's teaching on religious freedom, concerning which Hungarian theologians had to avoid all kinds of practical questions, proved particularly delicate. At most they could express views about the difficulties that could come with the loss of state-Church status in countries with Catholic traditions. Post-conciliar Hungarian theology, therefore, necessarily failed to elucidate the Church's social teaching and delineate a comprehensive social program.³⁵

The Council's teachings reached the broader strata of the Hungarian Catholic clergy and faithful through the mediation of academic theologians. The peace priest movement's attempt at an original theological interpretation of Vatican II did not spread widely, and the theological system, elaborated by György Bulányi based on the Council, likewise reached only a narrow circle of Catholics. Seminarians could become acquainted with the results of the Council first and foremost in theological lecture notes prepared by the teachers, as well as through the latter's lectures held in the course of priestly formation. It was first of all the retreats, spiritual exercises and further training, likewise held by theology professors, as well as writings published in separate volumes or (theological) journals, that transmitted the new viewpoints to ordained priests. As for the faithful, while a smaller number of them could become acquainted with the Council's teachings directly from the works, and perhaps lectures, of theologians, the overwhelming majority of them obtained their information from the repeated mediation of the clergy (sermons, catechisms).³⁶

According to Tamás Nyíri's highly controversial article, which appeared on the pages of *Teológia* in 1972, the reception of the Council showed serious deficiencies even among the clergy.³⁷ According to Nyíri's assertion, a mere 15–20 percent of priests had read all of the conciliar documents. It is undoubtedly more correct to speak of a mixed reception distorted by external influences. The clergy who were engaged in pastoral ministry did attempt to

embrace the Council's teachings in its lifestyle and pastoral practice, but because of the external limitations the Hungarian Church could not fully integrate the new theological impulses into the surviving old structures. Their efforts were nevertheless not entirely in vain, in as-much-as the key concepts of the conciliar ecclesiology became common knowledge.³⁸

Among the Council's larger audience, the changes that transpired in the world of the laity are harder to judge than even the effect it had on the clergy. However, an examination of the role of laypersons deserves special attention for two reasons with respect to the Council's reception: first, the council made an attempt to re-evaluate the place of the laity in the Church; and second, the crisis in priestly vocations witnessed in the period following the Council likewise contributed to the enhancement of their role.³⁹ The reduction in the number of priestly vocations was observable in Hungary as well. This is shown by the fact that in just the years between 1960 and 1972 130 priests abandoned their calling. In the Church living within the confines of the socialist system—and viewing laypeople with mistrust—this still did not lead to the formation of a new lay elite.⁴⁰ Only from the second half of the 1980s on, after the start of a theological correspondence school open to laypersons, can one speak of the inclusion of secular persons in religious education and pastoral work. The permanent diaconate, meanwhile, would not be established until the change in political regime.⁴¹

Unlike the examples in Western Europe, under contemporary circumstances there was no possibility for movements affecting the world of the laity, such as the Focolare Movement, the *Comunio e Liberazione*, *Opus Dei*, *Sant'Egidio*, etc, to appear in Hungary either. In Hungary, the role of these movements, which were organized following the teaching of the Council was filled (at least in the beginning and only to a certain extent) by the base-communities operating in the underground Church. In transplanting the theory and practice of the communal church model articulated at the Council in Hungary, it was the Bokor (Bush) Movement founded by the Piarist György Bulányi, as well as the priestly community *Regnum Maria-num*, which conducted pastoral work among youth despite the persecutions, that played outstanding roles.⁴²

As a result of the mixed reception of the Council's teachings, for the majority of believers the Church as a *Volkskirche* remained intact despite the large-scale secularization of society. For the majority, only the reform of the

liturgy represented a (superficial) change, which was not accompanied by a change in mentality as well. However, based on the work of theologians and, not least, the activity of the advocates of the communal model of the Church, who enjoyed great prestige in the eyes of the young priestly generation and dedicated laypersons, the teachings of the Second Vatican Council—albeit in a limited manner—gradually made their impact felt among the laity.⁴³

Notes

- ¹ Meetings with the members of the Hungarian council delegation. Rome, October 31, 1962. MNL-OL XIX-J-1-j. Olaszország 1945–1962. 5/i-008039/1–1962.
- ² Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on December 19, 1962. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1177; Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on December 22, 1965. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1267; Memorandum on negotiations with Bishop Miklós Dudás. Budapest, February 3, 1964. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0033-5/a/1964.
- ³ Summary report on the object codenamed “Liliom.” Budapest, January 21, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. “Canale,” 142–45.
- ⁴ Report on the activities of Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely. Budapest, March 22, 1965. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0033-3/a/1965; Report of agent “Somlai.” October 4, 1967. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 759/11. Kovács Sándor. 82–83. Rétfalvi, “Kovács Sándor szombathelyi püspök,” 76–77.
- ⁵ Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on September 1, 1964. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1212.
- ⁶ As was seen, the 1964 advent circular of the apostolic administrator of Esztergom, Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer, in the end did not appear because, among other reasons, it did not seek use the interpretative framework adopted by the state to inform the faithful about the Council . Cf. above, Part II, chapter 2.1.2.
- ⁷ On the preparation of the circular: Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on December 17, 1964. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1218. For the circular itself: *Ibid.*, 1222–24.
- ⁸ Report of the HSWP’s Nógrád County Comitee on the church policy. Salgótarján, May 13, 1966. MNL-OL M-KS 288. f. 22. cs. 1966. 7. ő. e. 3.
- ⁹ Memorandum. Szombathely, March 3, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 759/11. Kovács Sándor. 22.
- ¹⁰ See above, Part II, chapter 1.4.1.

- ¹¹ At the end of the second session, the ÁEH did not allow Pope Paul VI's Christmas message, sent via Hamvas, to the entire Hungarian people to be made public. Report of agent "Kecskeméti" on the Hungarian council delegation. Szeged, January 13, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 108. The message to be sent at the end of the third session was halted by Hamvas himself. Summary report on Session Two of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, January 17, 1964. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/7. "Canale," 136.
- ¹² Cf. Gárdonyi, "Magyar teológusok," 752.
- ¹³ Cf. Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on February 25, 1964. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1183–1185. According to the original plans the translations prepared abroad by the Council Commission would have been distributed in Hungary as well, but this the state authorities did not approve. Cf. Information report on the Hungarian edition of the council documents. Budapest, February 2, 1966. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O-14 963/10. "Canale," 57; ÁEH Chairman József Prantner to László Orbán, head of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda. Budapest, February 10, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0022-1/1966.
- ¹⁴ Cf. the items in the catalog of the National Széchényi Library. On the print-run see: Conference of the Bench of Bishops held on August 18, 1965. *Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar*, 1264; Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on May 31, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-13a-1/e/1967. 41.
- ¹⁵ Additional remarks of Gyula Szakács to the constitution *Dei Verbum*. Kecskemét, July 11, 1966. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-c. 28. d. 1.20/48. t.
- ¹⁶ Kránitz, "Magyar katolikus teológia," 133–134. The most important volumes appearing in Hungarian after the Council: *A zsinat*; Vitányi, *II. Vatikáni Zsinat*; Gál, *Zsinat és korforduló*; König, *Zsinat mérlege*.
- ¹⁷ Chenaux, "Agents de la réception," 426.
- ¹⁸ Cf. Szakos and Konkoly, "II. vatikáni egyetemes zsinat," 650–77; "Ezt cselekedjétek..." 142–50.
- ¹⁹ Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on December 9, 1970. VPKL I.1.n. 493/1971. 3.
- ²⁰ Magyar, "Magyarországi katolikus," 392–94.
- ²¹ Gergely, *Katolikus egyház*, 185–86.
- ²² Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on May 31, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a K-13a-1/e/1967. 35–36; Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on March 14–15, 1968. MKPK Irattára, Eppi Hung. 1103/1968. 4–5. The tasks of the presbyteral senate (council) and its relationship to the cathedral chapters is summed up briefly by Gergely, *Katolikus egyház*, 188–89.

- ²³ Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on May 31, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a K-13a-1/e/1967. 35–36; Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on June 15–16, 1971. VPKL I.1.n. 3204/1971. 3; Póka, "Egyházközségek," 277–78.
- ²⁴ Secretary of the Bishops' Conference to the members of the Bench of Bishops. Eger, May 20, 1967. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a K-13a-1/b/1967; Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on June 18, 1969. VPKL I.1.n. 1908/1969. 2.
- ²⁵ Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on August 12, 1970. VPKL I.1.n. 3038/1970.
- ²⁶ Cf. Koncz, "Papnevelés," 132–37; and Gaál, "Optatam totius," 225–38.
- ²⁷ This is the method proposed by Chenaux, "Agents de la réception," 426–36.
- ²⁸ Cf. Plans of the HSWP concerning the Hungarian Catholic Church. Budapest, January 8, 1970. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-d. 0032-1/1970. Published in: Lénárd et al, *Utak és útvesztők*, 273.
- ²⁹ Kránitz, "Magyar katolikus teológia," 136–40; Gárdonyi, "Magyar teológusok," 754.
- ³⁰ Gál, "Magyar katolikus papság," 100–107; Gárdonyi, "Magyar Katolikus Egyház," 29–30; Kránitz, "Magyar katolikus teológia," 140–41; Gárdonyi, "Magyar teológusok," 755–58.
- ³¹ Gárdonyi, "Magyar teológusok," 756–57.
- ³² Ibid, 753.
- ³³ Cf. Ibid., 751.
- ³⁴ Ibid., 755–56.
- ³⁵ Ibid., 757.
- ³⁶ Gál, "Magyar katolikus papság," 100–107; Kránitz, "Magyar katolikus teológia," 136–143; Gárdonyi, "Magyar teológusok," 758.
- ³⁷ Nyíri, "Hogyan él," 182–89. The fact that the conciliar documents first appeared in Hungarian in their entirety only three years later, in 1975, in any case also must have played a role in their unfamiliarity.
- ³⁸ Gárdonyi, "Magyar Katolikus Egyház," 30.
- ³⁹ Cf. Chenaux, "Agents de la réception," 430–36.
- ⁴⁰ Cf. Szalai, "Papi utánpótlás," 147–56; Meeting of the Bishop's Conference held on March 13, 1973. MNL-OL XIX-A-21-a. K-13a-3/1973. 9.
- ⁴¹ Gál, "Magyar katolikus papság," 106–108.
- ⁴² Gárdonyi, "Magyar Katolikus Egyház," 31–32.
- ⁴³ Ibid., 30.

Summary

Summarizing the results of our research, it may be stated first and foremost that it was the coincidence of the interests of three factors that made the Hungarian council fathers' travel possible. The role of catalyst was played by Pope John XXIII, elected in 1958, who regarded it as an urgent task that the Holy See re-establish the ties with the Church behind the Iron Curtain that were severed in the late 1940s. After the first unsuccessful attempts Pope Roncalli increasingly came to see the approaching Council as the appropriate opportunity for this. For this reason, beyond the demand of ensuring the Council's universality it was this intention that drove him to labor so persistently—and even agree to concessions—for the East European bishops to attend.

On the other side, the opportunity for Hungarian attendance at the Council was created by the pragmatic shift in ecclesiastical policy which took place in Hungary at the same time as the Council was being prepared. While the goal of the party state remained the complete elimination of religion, the political (and church-policy) leadership conceded that this would be attainable only in the long run. For this reason, after the defeat of the 1956 Revolution utilizing the churches, by now reckoning with the long-term survival of the situation, to serve the country's internal consolidation and break out of its international isolation appeared expedient in the mid-term.

On the plane of domestic politics, transplanting into political practice the theoretical distinction between "clerical reaction" (which was to be persecuted) and the loyal church structures (which could be put in the service of the regime's goals) did not encounter obstacles. However, extending the model that worked in Hungary to the realm of foreign policy

was not a foregone conclusion. On the one hand, Moscow's approval was needed for this; on the other, the government in Budapest ran the risk that on foreign soil it would lose its hold on the initiative. For this reason, the decision in favor of Hungarian attendance at the Council was reached only at the last moment, in the summer of 1962, after the Soviet position was determined no longer by the fear of the establishment of an anti-Communist Christian united front, but rather by the recognition that attending the Council might even provide an opening in foreign policy. In order to achieve this end, the Hungarian political (and church-policy) leadership considered acceptable the dangers inherent in allowing out a council delegation of limited size (which it attempted in any case to reduce by designating and continuously monitoring the persons traveling abroad).

The pastoral character of the Second Vatican Council intended by Pope John XXIII fundamentally ruled out direct political implications. Nonetheless, the results of my research confirm that because of Vatican and Hungarian (party-)state interests attaching to it, Vatican II, as it related to Hungary, was not primarily an internal ecclesiastical event; rather, it was closely tied throughout to the Vatican-Hungarian negotiations.

Based on the Holy See's positions voiced in communications with the bishops and during the negotiations with representatives of the (party) state, one may conclude that the Vatican regarded ensuring the loyalty of the Hungarian Church to Rome and its freedom in ecclesiastical governance and pastoral work as the most important tasks. Nevertheless, in the 1964 partial agreement only the first of these goals was achieved with complete success: the Hungarian government already by its willingness to negotiate signaled its recognition of Rome's competence in the internal affairs of the Catholic Church. The completion of the hierarchy, which ensured the basic conditions for the full administration of the sacraments and the survival of the ecclesiastical organization, likewise represented a step forward. At the same time that it warded off the risk of a Hungarian schism (which the Vatican perceived as a realistic danger in the late 1950s and early 1960s), the Holy See failed, however, to widen the Hungarian Church's inner room to maneuver substantially. It managed to achieve only results of a symbolic value, such as the removal of the church affairs commissioners from the episcopal residences. Therefore, during the second half of the Council the

Holy See strove particularly to encourage the appointed bishops to take the maximum advantage possible of the existing narrow framework.

By contrast, the Hungarian negotiating side attained its goals almost without exception. It had the status quo recognized and thereby had the legitimacy of the regime accepted, and its international prestige was increased as well. Attending the Council and bringing the Pontifical Hungarian Institute under Hungarian control also created the opportunity to tap into the Vatican's intelligence sources. The Hungarian side's more advantageous bargaining position played an important role in its successes: while the Hungarian People's Republic achieved its most fundamental goal simply by having begun the talks, the items included on the agenda for the negotiations were of key importance overwhelmingly from the Holy See's perspective (i.e., the survival of the Hungarian Church). Moreover, the Vatican could have exerted pressure on the Hungarian leadership at most through its moral authority and by the threat of international isolation. However, by accepting—indeed, urging—the secrecy of the talks, it relinquished these means as well.

Beyond this, the results of the bilateral negotiations and the evolution of Vatican–Hungarian relations were decisively influenced by the accuracy of the information available to the sides. It is no coincidence, therefore, that the Council became the prime arena for intelligence-gathering for both the Hungarian leadership and the Vatican. Consequently, neither side expected of the Hungarian council delegation primarily to participate actively in the work of the Council. During the first session their task was to prepare the ground for direct negotiations and, later, to continuously brief and advise.

The documents examined show that despite its increasing amount of information about Hungary, the Holy See's bargaining position was weakened because it still did not succeed in becoming fully informed about the situation of the Hungarian Church. Lacking knowledge of the Hungarian ecclesiastical position critical of the regime, the Vatican had no way of verifying the information coming from the loyal church figures (who in certain cases even had ties to state security), as a consequence of which Vatican policy became vulnerable to Hungarian attempts at disinformation and manipulation. Simultaneously, the new possibilities granted a head start

to the Hungarian side, which was widely able to gather information about the Holy See's plans (regarding the Hungarian Church).

On account of their intermediary, and later advisory, role, the importance of the Hungarian prelates in attendance grew during the Council. The pressure to meet the demands of dual loyalty had a braking effect on their activity, however. In the course of the conciliar work they complied with state expectations only reluctantly and attempted to fulfill only those assignments which in some form they themselves considered to be in the interest of the Hungarian Church. Thus, one may assume that their relatively weak showing at the Council concealed—at least in part—an intention to avoid advocating a position contrary to their convictions.

The Hungarian council delegation expended a significant amount of its energy, however, on activity outside the council hall (i.e., mediation and briefing, both diplomatic and political). Although in doing this the Hungarian bishops taking part in the delegation did attempt to provide the Holy See with thorough information about the situation of the Hungarian Church, the solutions they proposed were strongly determined by their desire to use them in part to justify their own loyal behavior and in part to assert particular or individual—material or career—interests.

The results of my research also highlight the fact that whereas Hungarian attendance at the Council and Vatican–Hungarian negotiations were directly linked, no such intimate connection can be demonstrated between the teachings of the Second Vatican Council and the theoretical grounding of the new Vatican eastern policy.

The new Vatican eastern policy was not the consequence of a new theoretical approach but the practical application, in accordance with the centuries-old tradition of Vatican diplomacy, of “thesis and hypothesis.” In contrast to Pius XII, who strove to secure the fullest freedom of the Church possible (thesis), John XXIII, taking into account the actual situation (hypothesis), showed a willingness to make even significant concessions for partial improvement. A more profound theoretical grounding for the new, pragmatic political practice would take place only subsequently, however: partly in the encyclical *Pacem in Terris*, and partly in the conciliar documents discussing those issues that concerned the eastern policy most: the declaration on religious freedom and the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes*. At the same time, Vatican II, with its atmosphere of openness and the introduction

of the dynamic-inductive approach complementing the static-deductive outlook that had previously defined theology, from the outset indirectly provided a favorable background for the new *Ostpolitik*, in as much as the adoption of the new theological outlook had a reinforcing effect on the pragmatic political practice based on the “hypothesis.”

Examination of the Hungarian example indicates that one of the main deficiencies of the eastern policy lay precisely in the fact that it remained within the traditional framework of “thesis and hypothesis.” This model, concentrating on securing *libertas ecclesiae*, no longer proved sufficient against the tactics of the new Hungarian ecclesiastical policy, which instead of the open persecution of the Church regarded the more refined persecution of religion and faith, the elimination of the religious world view, as its primary goal, while treating the Church as a mere means of legitimizing the prevailing regime. Although on the basis of the teaching articulated in the declaration *Dignitatis Humanae* the urging of *libertas religionis* received an increasingly greater role in the period after the Council, it was Pope John Paul II, coming from the Socialist Bloc, who recognized that socialist ecclesiastical policy, which aspired to introduce a materialist monopoly on ideology, must be countered with the demand for the assertion of religious freedom, based on human dignity.

Contrary to Vatican hopes, even the reinforced Hungarian hierarchy was unable to counterbalance the deficiencies in the eastern policy to a sufficient degree. Thus, in the short term the Second Vatican Council could not become the basis for the inner renewal of the Hungarian Church. Indeed, the enhanced role of the bishops that occurred as a corollary of the Council’s image of the Church improved the state’s position, because in numerous areas decentralization, which affected practical pastoral work, helped to control and influence the life of the Church and the reception of the Council.

A thorough examination of the role played by the Hungarian (Catholic) press in the Council’s reception would have exceeded the bounds of this volume. The sources we have unearthed nonetheless allow us to conclude that the informational policy worked out by the state in advance proved critical in allowing only those elements of the Council’s teachings that stabilized the regime (or at least did not threaten it) to be realized. The sources suggest also that a comparison and thorough analysis of the published writings of agents working in the press, and their agent reports,

could be especially promising in judging the extent to which Hungarian church policy's intentions to manipulate were actually asserted.

Finally, the results of the present research also help to illuminate the division of labor in ecclesiastical policy within the Soviet Bloc, and also stimulate further—comparative—examinations. What makes the issue especially interesting is that in the previously unified stance on the tasks related to the Catholic Church a significant differentiation can be observed among the states of the Soviet Bloc by the Council's end. The Soviet, Polish and East German leadership assessed the overture by the Holy See, manifested in Vatican II as well as in the new eastern policy, as a tactical move that was dangerous to the regime and must be rejected. By contrast, those guiding Czechoslovak and Hungarian ecclesiastical policy saw an opportunity to harness the diplomatic negotiations and ideological dialogue offered by the Holy See for the service of the regime.

Further research will be needed to prove the supposition that the autonomy permitted to each country in forming its position meant that Moscow designated Czechoslovakia and Hungary, which shared many similar features of church policy, as a testing ground. In any case, a comparative analysis of the two countries' negotiations with the Holy See and access to Vatican sources are needed to decide whether it was based on the Vatican's decision or on Soviet orders that in the end Hungary alone became the experimental laboratory of eastern policy.

The data currently available suggest that this was more the Holy See's decision. At the start of the Council the Vatican had still wished to establish ties with the churches of all socialist countries, and through them—in their interest—with the leaders of all states. Later, based on the parallel experiences in Czechoslovakia and Hungary, the more rigid stance displayed by Prague may have led the Vatican to show Hungary special treatment and regard her as an example for other socialist states to follow. After the 1964 partial agreement failed to meet the hopes attached to it, it was precisely this failure that led to the Hungarian model being considered merely experimental, and eventually the agreement concluded with Yugoslavia in 1966 came to be viewed as the standard to be followed in bilateral relations.

Chronology

1945

4 April Papal Nuncio Angelo Rotta is expelled from Hungary.

1948

23 August The World Council of Churches is formed in Amsterdam. The Calvinist, Lutheran, and Baptist churches are the only churches in Hungary who join.

18 September–

7 October

26 December

Archbishop Gyula Czapik of Eger makes a visit to Rome.

Cardinal József Mindszenty, archbishop of Esztergom, is arrested.

1949

8 February

The Budapest People's Court sentence Cardinal József Mindszenty, archbishop of Esztergom, to life imprisonment

1 July

The decree of the Holy Office of 28 June condemning any form of collaboration with the Communists is published in *Acta Apostolicae Sedis*.

1950

30 August

Minister of Religious Affairs and Education József Darvas and Archbishop József Grósz of Kalocsa sign an agreement between the People's Republic of Hungary and the Hungarian Catholic Bench of Bishops.

9 October

The Vatican Secretariat of State sends a letter to Archbishop József Grósz objecting to the signing of an agreement falling outside the competence of the bishops.

1953

6 April Bishop József Pétery of Vác is interned in the Hejce retirement home.

1956

25 April Death of Archbishop Gyula Czapik of Eger.
12 May Archbishop József Grósz of Kalocsa is pardoned by the Presidential Council on the recommendation of the minister of justice, and is permitted to return to his seat.
31 October Cardinal József Mindszenty, archbishop of Esztergom, arrives in Budapest under military escort.
4 November Cardinal Mindszenty is given refuge in the United States Embassy in Budapest.

1957

21 January A decree of the S. Congregatio Concilii suspends priests appointed by the State Office for Church Affairs (ÁEH) and not in accordance with the canons.
24 March The Presidential Council issues Legal Edict No. 22 of 1957 on church appointments.
24 May The Bench of Catholic Bishops sets up the Catholic Committee of the National Peace Council and the Catholic peace movement Opus Pacis.
16 July The Holy See bans any Catholic priest, under pain of excommunication, from undertaking political appointments or membership of parliament without permission. It orders those carrying such mandates to resign within one month.
15 August Bishop Bertalan Badalik of Veszprém is interned in the Hejce retirement home.

1958

2 February The S. Congregatio Concilii excommunicates the priests Miklós Beresztóczy, Richárd Horváth, and János Máté for remaining as members of parliament.
20 April –
10 May A thirty-strong Catholic, Calvinist, and Lutheran Church delegation led by Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád visits Moscow and the Baltic republics.

- 1 June The founding meeting of the Christian Peace Conference opens in the Salvator Church in Prague.
- 10 June The HSWP Politburo passes a resolution concerning Church-state relations.
- 22 July The HSWP Politburo passes a resolution on combating the religious worldview and on the information and education of the religious masses.
- 9 October Death of Pope Pius XII.
- 28 October Angelo Giuseppe Roncalli, patriarch of Venice, is elected pope and assumes the name John XXIII.

1959

- 25 January John XXIII announces an ecumenical council.
- 31 January In a memorandum to the CPSU CC, Georgei Alexandrovic Zhukov, chairman of the State Committee for Cultural Relations of the Council of Ministers of the Soviet Union, labels the Ecumenical Council as a Vatican-led Christian front against Communism.
- 8 February Cardinal Secretary of State Domenico Tardini, on behalf of Pope John XXIII, calls on the Hungarian bishops to make an *ad limina* visit.
- 19 February A document on the council produced by the Soviet religious authorities sets the primary objective as frustrating the ecumenical goals of the Holy See.
- 9 March At the government's request, fourteen students are expelled from the Budapest Central Seminary for opposition to the peace priest movement, and most of their fellows express solidarity.
- 4 April The Holy Office confirms its anti-Communist decree of 28 June 1949.
- 24 April Archbishop József Grósz of Kalocsa, Bishop Ferenc Rogács of Pécs, Auxiliary Bishop Imre Kisberk of Székesfehérvár, Archabbot Norbert Legányi of Pannonhalma and Franciscan Provincial Superior Béla Váradi take an oath on the Constitution of the People's Republic of Hungary.
- 12 May The religious policy resolution of the HSWP Politburo sees the change in Vatican policy as purely tactical, and therefore does not find good reason for the Hungarian bishops to travel to Rome. It expresses the need for annual consultation with the other socialist countries to coordinate church policy.

16 May	The <i>antepreparatoria</i> committee for the Council is set up under Cardinal Secretary of State Domenico Tardini.
22 May	Archbishop Grösz sends a letter to Cardinal Tardini outlining the difficulties of nominating bishops as requested by the Vatican.
25 May	The Hungarian Embassy in Rome reports that the Ecumenical Council is motivated by Pope John's wish to neutralize the conservative forces in the Curia.
25 May – 13 June	Miklós Esty, honorary chamberlain to His Holiness, travels to Rome by invitation of Vince Tomek, Piarist superior general.
29 May	Archbishop Grösz is informed that the Hungarian bishops will not be permitted to accept Cardinal Tardini's invitation of 8 February.
2 June	Presidential Council decree on the establishment of the ÁEH. Károly Olt is appointed chairman of the office.
18 June	Cardinal Tardini sends a letter to the bishops of the Church requesting them to propose subjects for discussion at the Council.
24 June	Archabbot Norbert Legányi of Pannonhalma is called to Rome for the Congress of abbots.
29 June	John XXIII issues his first encyclical, <i>Ad Petri Cathedram</i> .
14–23 July	Polikárp Radó and Béla Saád travel to Rome. Radó is the first priest since 1948 to have travelled to Rome and then returned to Hungary.
22 July	The Hungarian Embassy in Rome reports that the Vatican is worried that the Hungarian Church, like the Chinese, will break from the Holy See.
21 August	Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár writes a <i>votum</i> for the Council.
17 September	Károly Olt, chairman of the ÁEH, bans Hungarian bishops from posting their vota.
7 October	Pope John appoints Gellért Belon and József Winkler as bishops. The state authorities declare the appointments invalid on 25 November.
2 November	The UN Special Political Committee unanimously passes a Soviet–American motion for disarmament proposals to be discussed by a ten-member disarmament committee which will sit in January.

1960

- 24–31 January Council of the Diocese of Rome.
30 January The HSWP Politburo judges that the Holy See wishes to prepare the ground for direct contact between the bishops and the Vatican, and will turn a blind eye to certain things.
- 1 March The HSWP Politburo makes a resolution on observations regarding developing relations between the state and the Catholic Church.
- 19 March Titular Bishop István Zadravecz ordains eight priests in the house of István Tabódy. A further nine are ordained in 1961.
- 29 March The HSWP Politburo decides that the Hungarian bishops may attend the Council if the Mindszenty affair is resolved.
- 6 June Pope John sets up the bodies to prepare for the Council in his *motu proprio* *Superno Dei nutu*: one central committee, ten other committees and three secretariats.
- 21 June The HSWP Politburo discusses questions of “combating internal reaction.”
- 15 September Archbishop Grósz sends a letter to Cardinal Secretary of State Tardini on the secret ordinations of priests.
- 5 November Mihály Endrey ordains László Rózsavölgyi in secret as titular bishop of Lystra.
- 22 November Eight Budapest Catholic pastors are arrested for setting up a youth organization.

1961

- 3 January Following an audience with the Italian ambassador to Budapest, Pope John notes in his diary the need to resolve the Mindszenty affair.
- 14 January The Hungarian Embassy in Rome sends further information on preparations for the Ecumenical Council.
- 6 February House raids are carried out at 400 places in Budapest. They result in the arrest of 85 persons, including 47 priests, for youth (community) organization work. Trials of priests arrested in the previous November take place between June and August.
- 17 February At a meeting of the HSWP CC, Lajos Fehér presents the report on the implementation of the Party resolution of October 1960 and the CC approves the announcement (published on the 19th), Socialist production now also prevails in agriculture.
- 20 February Death of Bishop Ferenc Rogács of Pécs.
- 12 May John XXIII publishes his encyclical *Mater et Magistra*.

17–20 May	The heads of the state religious affairs offices of the socialist countries meet in Karlovy Vary and decide on the political preparations for the Christian Peace Assembly in Prague; they also accept the guidelines to be followed at the meeting of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi.
13–18 June	The first Christian Peace Assembly is held in Prague.
30 July	Death of Cardinal Secretary of State Domenico Tardini.
12–13 August	The Berlin Wall is built, dividing the east and west of the city.
7 September	The HSWP Politburo passes a proposal to sideline Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár.
10 September	John XXIII makes a speech to the governments of the world on peace. Khrushchev makes a positive response to some parts of the speech.
3 October	Death of Archbishop József Grósz of Kalocsa.
16 October	The state security authorities open a dossier under the codename “Canale” to investigate persons maintaining illegal contacts between the Vatican and the Hungarian Catholic Church.
18 November– 6 December	Five Catholic observers attend the meeting of the World Council of Churches in New Delhi.
25 November	Nikita Khrushchev sends a telegram congratulating Pope John XXIII on his 80th birthday.
25 December	John XXIII announces the Second Vatican Council for 1962 by the apostolic constitution <i>Humanae Salutis</i> .

1962

2 January	The Central Preparatory Commission of the Council sends a letter inviting those entitled to attend the Second Vatican Council.
17–19 January	Imre Miklós, deputy chairman of the ÁEH, meets in Bratislava with the leaders of the Czechoslovak state religious affairs office. The parties note that the Vatican is making every effort to ensure the attendance of the Eastern European bishops at the Council, and agree that it is undesirable to permit attendance.
2 February	Pope John’s <i>motu proprio Consilium</i> sets the opening of the Second Vatican Council for 11 October 1962.
26 February	In Szombathely, Bishop Sándor Kovács holds a reflective meditation on the Second Vatican Council.
17 March	The Soviet, Polish, and Hungarian ambassadors to Rome hold a meeting on Vatican issues.

- 21 March In a proposal drawn up for Soviet political church leaders, Archimandrite Nikodim argues for sending Russian Orthodox observers to the Second Vatican Council.
- 14 April A memorandum is drawn up for the Hungarian ambassador in Rome on the deficiencies of contacts between the Vatican and the People's Republic of Hungary.
- 19 April The HSWP Politburo considers recalling Gyula Simó, Hungarian ambassador in Rome.
- 25–28 April The leaders of the state religious affairs offices of the socialist countries hold an international meeting in Budapest. On the matter of permitting bishops to attend the Second Vatican Council, the meeting leaves the decision to the leadership of religious policy in each country.
- 30 April Francesco Lardone, internuncio in Ankara, enquires from the Hungarian ambassador there as to whether some Hungarian bishops may travel to the Council.
- 1 May Cardinal Benedetto Aloisi Masella, prefect of the Sacred Congregation of Rites, grants special confirmation faculties to ordinaries and deans working in Hungary.
- 10 May The Hungarian bishops' Rome representative István Mester forwards the invitation to the Council to Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád.
- 12 May At a national ÁEH meeting, staff are informed of the decisions of the international meeting of religious affairs offices on the Council and are told that Hungarian attendance has not yet been decided.
- 24 May Bishop Hamvas requests József Prantner, chairman of the ÁEH, for permission to travel to the Council. The ÁEH asks the Hungarian ambassadors in Rome and Paris for information on the Second Vatican Council and the policies of the Holy See. After a long delay, their replies arrive on 13 September and 17 October.
- 25 May Ankara Internuncio Francesco Lardone again asks the Hungarian ambassador to Turkey whether the Hungarian bishops may travel to the Council.
- 30 May Bishop Hamvas visits ÁEH Chairman Prantner in person in the matter of travel to the Council.
- 2 June Hamvas sends a letter to Cardinal Gustavo Testa acknowledging receipt of the council invitation.
- 6 June A representative of the Ankara internuncio approaches the Hungarian ambassador to Turkey again to ask whether the Hungarian bishops may attend the Council.

- 9–23 June A group of Hungarian priests make a pilgrimage to Lourdes. One of their objectives is to prepare the ground for a good reception of a potential Hungarian delegation to the Council.
- 12 June The HSWP Politburo gives approval in principle for Bishop Hamvas to attend the first session of the Second Vatican Council.
- 19 June László Orbán, head of the HSWP CC Department of Agitation and Propaganda, is informed that Miklós Esty has received a letter from Cardinal Franz König of Vienna enquiring about the possibility of visiting Bishop Hamvas of Csanád.
- 25 June István Mester forwards the invitations to the Second Vatican Council to every Hungarian bishop. The Holy See indirectly enquires from the Hungarian ambassador in Rome whether the Hungarian bishops may attend the council.
- 5–7 July The socialist state security services meet in Warsaw to discuss action on the Second Vatican Council.
- 9–14 July Among the attenders at the World Peace Conference in Moscow are Bishop Endre Hamvas and Pál Brezanóczy, apostolic administrator of Eger.
- 10 July–
25 August Polikárp Radó travels to Rome in the matter of publishing the book *Enchiridion Liturgicum*. On behalf of the government, he urges talks on the matter of appointing bishops.
- 13 July The Czechoslovakian ambassador to Budapest, František Píšek, informs Deputy Foreign Minister Frigyes Puja that the Czechoslovakian government is prepared to allow delegates to the Council if the government can decide who can go, and if the socialist system is not attacked in the Council.
- 21 July Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár writes a letter to Bishop Hamvas taking the view that every bishop should go to the Council or nobody.
- 27 July The Hungarian state security apparatus produces its first operative plan to monitor the Hungarian delegation to the Second Vatican Council. An ÁEH document lays down the policy for disseminating information during the council period.
- 7 August The HSWP Politburo takes a proposal for council attendance off its agenda and accepts a proposal for the visit to Hungary of Cardinal Franz König of Vienna.
- 11 August The HSWP Politburo decides that József Mindszenty can only be allowed out of the country after the end of the Council.

23 August	The HSWP CC Foreign Affairs Department prepares a memorandum on which socialist countries are allowing bishops to attend the Council.
27 August	Bishop Hamvas sends a letter to the Holy See asking for apostolic administrators to be allowed to attend the Council.
September	At the instruction of Pope John, Cardinal Eugène Tisserant assures Archimandrite Nikodim at their meeting in Metz that the Council will not criticize Communism.
4 September	The HSWP Politburo grants its consent for Bishops Hamvas of Csanád and Sándor Kovács of Szombathely, and Pál Brezanóczy, apostolic administrator of Eger, to take part in Session One of the Second Vatican Council.
11 September	Pope John's radio message <i>Ecclesia Christi lumen gentium</i> . This message is cited in a plea at the end of Session One to revise the centrally-drafted council proposals.
15 September	Bishop Kálmán Papp of Győr authorizes Pál Brezanóczy, apostolic administrator of Eger, to represent him at the Council.
19 September	At a national meeting of the ÁEH, staff are informed of the reasons for the Hungarian delegation's attendance at the Second Vatican Council.
24–26 September	József Prantner meets in Prague with the head of the Czechoslovakian religious affairs office on strengthening the Christian Peace Conference in Prague, proposals for cooperation between the religious affairs offices of the two countries, and matters concerning the Second Vatican Council.
27 September	Imre Miklós requests foreign currency for the nine persons attending the Council.
27 September– 4 October	Johannes Willebrands, secretary of the Secretariat for Promoting Christian Unity, informs the Holy Synod in Moscow of the preparations and goals of the Council. As a result of the discussions, the Russian Orthodox Church sends observers to the Council.
28 September	Pope John XXIII appoints Apostolic Administrators Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer of Esztergom, Pál Brezanóczy of Eger, and Sándor Klempa of Veszprém as Council Experts.
3 October	The Bench of Bishops holds an extraordinary session. The ÁEH gives a reception for the delegation to the Council. Veni Sancte is celebrated in St Stephen's Basilica.
4 October	The Hungarian council delegation's train leaves from Keleti Station in Budapest at 9.35 am, travelling to Rome via Vienna.
6 October	The Hungarian council delegation arrives in Rome at 8.55 am.

10 October	Pope John XXIII receives Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád, Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely and Pál Brezanóczy, apostolic administrator of Eger.
11 October	Opening ceremony of the Second Vatican Council in the presence of more than 2500 council fathers.
19 October	Bishops Hamvas and Kovács, and Apostolic Administrator Brezanóczy pay an introductory visit to Cardinal Secretary of State Amelto Giovanni Cicognani.
20 October	At its third general assembly, Bishop Hamvas makes a contribution to the discussion on the message to the world subsequently passed by the Council, <i>Caritas Christi urget nos</i> .
25 October	Pope John gives a radio address in French calling on the politicians of the world to maintain peace. First sent to the Rome embassies of the United States and the Soviet Union, the papal message contributes to the resolution of the Cuban Missile Crisis that broke out on 22 October.
26 October	Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely and Apostolic Administrator Pál Brezanóczy of Eger take part in a concert in the Hungarian Academy in Rome.
2 November– 30 December	István Berényi, head of IM Subsection III/III–1–c. is in Rome to control his agents.
9 November	Substitute of the Secretariat of State Angelo Dell’Acqua receives Bishop Kovács.
10 November	Exhibition on the “Church of Silence” opens in Rome.
11 November	Bishop Hamvas meets Secretary of the S.C. of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs Antonio Samorè to discuss the Mindszenty affair.
12 November	Bishop Kovács has talks with Secretary of the S.C. of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affaires Antonio Samorè.
15 November	József Zágon holds a reception in the Pontifical Hungarian Institute in honour of the Hungarian council fathers.
16 November	Antonio Samorè instructs Florio Banfi to find out from Bishop Kovács how much freedom of governance the Hungarian bishops have.
25 November	Pope John XXIII gives a second audience to the Hungarian clergy attending Session One of the Council.
27 November	The S. C. of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs decides that the chance provided by the Council to improve the lot of local churches must be taken, by communicating the requirements of the Holy See to the relevant governments via the bishops

- released for the Council. Pope John XXIII announces the date of Session Two of the Council as 8 September 1963.
- 28 November In talks with Apostolic Administrator Pál Brezanóczy, Agostino Casaroli puts forward the possibility of sending a pontifical commissioner to Hungary.
- 1 December Apostolic Administrator Pál Brezanóczy briefs Prelate Josip Žabkar on the state of the Hungarian Church and urges the sending of an apostolic visitor to Hungary. István Mester provides the Hungarian bishops with a draft letter requesting a pontifical commissioner to be sent to Hungary. Pál Brezanóczy holds talks with Secretary of the S.C. of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs Antonio Samorè.
- 3 December Brezanóczy talks to Agostino Casaroli. At their meeting, he hands over the letter requesting a pontifical commissioner to be sent to Hungary.
- 4 December The Hungarian Embassy in Rome holds a reception in honour of the Hungarian bishops.
- 6 December Cardinal Secretary of State Amleto Cicognani reads out and explains to Hamvas, Kovács, and Brezanóczy the *Nota verbale* addressed to the Hungarian government.
- 7 December Antonio Samorè hands over the *Nota verbale* in writing to the Hungarian bishops.
- 8 December Closing ceremony of Session One of the Council.
- 27 December Deputy Chairman of the Soviet religious affairs office Ryazanov requests information from Pope John XXIII on the message sent to the Hungarian Church.
- 28 December The HSWP Politburo consents to the publication of the pope's message to the Hungarian faithful and the circular of the Bench of Bishops.

1963

- 11 January Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád requests another five-year exemption from the obligation of *ad limina* visits for Hungarian bishops.
- 14 January Apostolic Administrator Pál Brezanóczy of Eger prepares a memorandum for the ÁEH on Session One of the Second Vatican Council and on the tasks for Session Two.
- 18 January Bishop Hamvas officially sends the Secretariat of State's *Nota verbale* to József Prantner, chairman of the ÁEH.
- 9 February Metropolitan Josyp Slipyj of Lemberg is released from Soviet custody and arrives in Rome.

15 February	The Holy See notifies Bishop Hamvas of its intention to send an envoy to Hungary.
27–28 February	The religious affairs offices of the socialist countries hold a meeting in Jilovist in Czechoslovakia.
28 February	Bishop Hamvas sends a letter to the Holy See informing them that it is not the right time for a visit of a Vatican envoy to Hungary.
1 March	Pope John XXIII is awarded the Balzan Peace Prize.
22 March	Under a general amnesty, the Presidential Council of the Hungarian People's Republic releases 25 imprisoned priests and members of religious orders and several lay apostles. The ÁEH again reject the appointments of Gellért Belon and József Winkler as bishops.
28 March	Pope John XXIII sets up the Pontifical Commission for the Revision of the Code of Canon Law.
2 April	The HSWP Politburo formulates its position on the issues raised in the Vatican <i>Nota verbale</i> and the Mindszenty affair, and approves the start of talks on these between Hungary and the Holy See.
11 April	Pope John XXIII issues his encyclical <i>Pacem in Terris</i> .
18 April	Cardinal Franz König, archbishop of Vienna, visits Cardinal József Mindszenty in the Budapest embassy of the United States.
20 April	Bishop Hamvas informs the Holy See by letter that the Hungarian government is prepared to accept the Vatican envoy.
26 April	Bishop Hamvas requests Pope Paul VI by letter to release the excommunicated priests from their punishment.
29 April	Bishop Hamvas and Apostolic Administrator Brezanóczy hold talks in Vienna with Agostino Casaroli on the state of the Hungarian Church.
7–9 May	Agostino Casaroli holds his first talks with representatives of the Hungarian government. During his stay in Budapest, he visits Cardinal Mindszenty in the building of the American Embassy.
10 May	Pope John XXIII receives the Balzan Peace Prize in Rome.
28–30 May	The state religious affairs offices of the socialist countries hold a meeting in Budapest.
3 June	Pope John XXIII dies in Rome at 7.45 pm.
6 June	The Hungarian ambassador in Rome, József Száll, proposes that Bishop Hamvas attend the funeral of the pope.
21 June	At the conclave, Giovanni Battista Montini, archbishop of Milan, is elected pope, and assumes the name Paul VI.

25 June	The HSWP Politburo consents to Bishop Hamvas of Csanád, Bishop Kovács of Szombathely and Apostolic Administrator Brezanóczy of Eger travelling to Rome for the coronation of the pope.
27 June	Pope Paul VI sets the date for the start of Session Two of the Council as 29 September.
27 June–4 July	Bishop Hamvas and Apostolic Administrator Brezanóczy travel to Rome for the coronation of Pope Paul VI.
28 June	Bishop Hamvas and Apostolic Administrator Brezanóczy make a courtesy visit to Agostino Casaroli in Rome.
30 June	Coronation of Pope Paul VI.
3 July	Pope Paul VI grants a 20 minute audience to Bishop Hamvas and Apostolic Administrator Brezanóczy.
16 July	A closed meeting of the S. C. of Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs approves the continuation of talks with the Czechoslovakian and Hungarian governments.
26–28 July	The state security bodies of the socialist countries hold a meeting in Budapest.
27 August	The HSWP Politburo passes a proposal for continuation of talks with the Vatican commissioner and for persons to travel to Session Two of the Council.
6–10 September	Talks between the Czechoslovak government and the Vatican in Rome.
20 September	Gyula Kállai approves the bishops who will travel to Session Two of the Council. Agostino Casaroli receives Imre Timkó, who arrives in Rome as representative of the Hungarian council delegation.
23 September	Bishop Hamvas sends a letter to Agostino Casaroli on illegal ordination of priests.
26 September	The Hungarian council delegation arrives in Rome for Session Two.
27 September	Bishop Hamvas and Apostolic Administrator Brezanóczy make a courtesy visit to Agostino Casaroli. The émigré journal Új Hungária attacks some members of the Hungarian council delegation.
29 September	Opening ceremony of Session Two of the Second Vatican Council.
1–5 October	A Hungarian government delegation meets representatives of the Holy See in Rome.
8 October	Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád conducts talks with Agostino Casaroli on the state of the Hungarian Church.

9 October	Bishop Kovács conducts talks with Agostino Casaroli on the state of the Hungarian Church.
14 October	Auxiliary Bishop Vince Kovács of Vác conducts talks with Agostino Casaroli on the state of the Hungarian Church.
15 October	Auxiliary Bishop Imre Szabó of Esztergom conducts talks with Agostino Casaroli on the state of the Hungarian Church.
18 October	Apostolic Administrator Pál Brezanóczy of Eger conducts talks with Agostino Casaroli on the state of the Hungarian Church.
20 October	Pál Brezanóczy has lunch with István Barankovics.
24–31 October	Visit to Rome by the Hungarian peace priests Imre Potyondi, József Mihácz, Béla Bacsóka, and Andor Vértés.
1 November	József Zágon, Regent of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute gives lunch in honour of the Hungarian bishops.
3 November	Vince Tomek, Piarist superior general, gives lunch in honour of the Hungarian bishops.
8–21 November	Pilgrimage by Hungarian priests to Lourdes and Rome.
11 November	Bishop Hamvas discusses the peace priests question with Casaroli.
12 November	Pope Paul VI receives the Hungarian delegation to Session Two of the Council.
21 November	At the 72nd session of the Council, Endre Hamvas gives a speech on the draft resolution on ecumenism. The Hungarian Embassy in Rome gives a lunch in honour of the Hungarian bishops.
22 November	President John F. Kennedy of the United States is assassinated in Dallas.
30 November	Reception and concert for the Hungarian bishops in the Rome Hungarian Academy.
1 December	József Zágon invites the Hungarian bishops attending Session Two to lunch.
3 December	Amleto Cicognani, secretary of state, and subsequently Antonio Samorè, secretary of the Congregation for Extraordinary Ecclesiastical Affairs, receive the Hungarian bishops attending the Council. Hamvas makes a submission via Casaroli to Paul VI on behalf of the excommunicated priests Miklós Beresztóczy and Richárd Horváth.
4 December	Closing ceremony of Session Two of the Council. Pope Paul VI issues the liturgical constitution <i>Sacrosanctum Concilium</i> and the decree on mass media <i>Inter Mirifica</i> . The Hungarian council delegation travels home from Rome.

1964

4–6 January	Pope Paul VI makes a pilgrimage to the Holy Land.
25 February	The Hungarian Bench of Catholic Bishops sets up the National Liturgical Council.
4 March	Pope Paul VI appoints Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely to the commission on liturgical reform, the <i>Consilium liturgicum</i> .
14–24 March	Agostino Casaroli meets representatives of the Hungarian government in Budapest.
19 March	The Hungarian government recalls the ministerial commissioners placed in the diocesan courts of Hajdúdorog and Székesfehérvár.
19 May	Pope Paul VI sets up the Secretariat for Non-Christians.
25–30 May	The leaders of the religious affairs offices of the socialist countries meet in Berlin.
27 May–30 June	Raymund Rákos OFM Conv., Hungarian confessor at St Peter's Basilica, visits Hungary.
9–14 June	A Hungarian government delegation meets representatives of the Holy See in Rome.
11 June	Bishop Hamvas asks the ÁEH to approve the publication in a Hungarian-language circular of the apostolic exhortation issued by Pope Paul VI in January. József Prantner, chairman of the ÁEH, grants permission.
25 June	Agostino Casaroli hands over a draft agreement to the Hungarian ambassador in Rome, József Száll.
3 July	Cardinal Secretary of State Amleto Cicognani officially announces that the pope has set 14 September as the date for the start of Session Three.
6 August	Pope Paul VI issues his encyclical <i>Ecclesiam Suam</i> .
7 August	Bishop Hamvas sends a letter to the Vatican Secretariat of State requesting the release of Miklós Beresztóczy and associates.
11 August	The HSWP Politburo approves a proposal for talks with the Vatican and appoints the members of the Hungarian Church delegation to Session Three and the persons who will travel to the World Eucharistic Congress in Bombay.
23 August	Andor Csizmadia prepares a memorandum on treaties between the Holy See and other states.
31 August	ÁEH Chairman József Prantner receives the official authorization to sign the agreement.
9 September	Bishop Hamvas lodges a proposal for the appointment of new bishops.

9–14 September	Representatives of the Holy See and Hungary continue talks in Budapest.
14 September	Session Three of the Council starts. The Presidential Council grants its consent for the appointments of Endre Hamvas as archbishop of Kalocsa, Pál Brezanóczy as titular bishop, József Cserháti (vicar capitular of Pécs) as titular bishop and apostolic administrator of Pécs, József Ijjas as titular bishop and apostolic administrator of Csanád, and József Winkler as auxiliary bishop of Szombathely. Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer, apostolic administrator of Esztergom, has a brief meeting with Agostino Casaroli.
15 September	A partial agreement between the Holy See and Hungary is signed by Agostino Casaroli and József Prantner.—Bishops Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár, Bertalan Badalik of Veszprém and József Pétery of Vác meet briefly with Agostino Casaroli.
18 September	The Hungarian delegation travel to Session Three of the Council.
21 September	In response to a special request by the Hungarian council fathers, money is transferred to the Hungarian Embassy in Rome.
26 September	Sándor Csertő hosts lunch for Archbishop Endre Hamvas, Bishop Pál Brezanóczy, and István Hamvas.
29 September	Norbert Legányi, archabbot of Pannonhalma, accompanied by Gellért Békés OSB, visits the Secretariat of State. István Barankovics has a conversation with Apostolic Administrator Brezanóczy on the state of the Hungarian Church.
1 October	French bishops hold a dinner for some of the bishops attending the Council.
2 October	Agostino Casaroli instructs Bishop József Ijjas of Csanád to make a proposal for resolving the matter of the excommunicated priests.
7 October	István Barankovics has a conversation with Apostolic Administrator Pál Brezanóczy on the state of the Hungarian Church.
12 October	Archbishop Hamvas meets István Barankovics.
14 October	At the 101st session of the Council, József Bánk makes a speech about the draft proposal on clerical service. József Száll, the Hungarian ambassador, receives Archabbot Norbert Legányi, Auxiliary Bishop József Winkler and Apostolic Administrator József Cserháti. Khrushchev is dismissed as general secretary of the CPSU by the Presidency of the CC. Next day he is also dismissed as prime minister.
21 October	Agostino Casaroli receives the Hungarian ordinaries attending Session Three of the Council.

22 October	At the 107th session of the Council, Endre Hamvas speaks in the general debate on the draft document <i>The Church in the Modern World</i> .
24 October	Agostino Casaroli receives the Hungarian ordinaries attending Session Three of the Council.
26 October	Some of the Hungarian delegation to the Council return to Hungary to ordain the new bishops.
28 October	The newly-appointed bishops are ordained in Budapest. In Rome, István Hamvas, attendant of Bishop Endre Hamvas of Csanád, meets with Luigi Bongianino.
2 November	The Hungarian section of Vatican Radio speaks critically of the church policy of the People's Republic of Hungary and the partial agreement between the Holy See and Hungary.
5 November	József Zágon transfers the Pontifical Hungarian Institute in Rome to a representative of the Hungarian Bench of Bishops.
11 November	The Hungarian Embassy gives a reception for the bishops attending the Council.
14 November	Pope Paul VI grants an audience to the Hungarian bishops.
15 November	Some members of the Hungarian council delegation have lunch with the French bishops.
17 November	The Hungarian council delegation hosts a dinner for the French bishops.
19 November	Archbishop Hamvas submits a proposal to Pope Paul VI for the revocation of excommunication for Miklós Beresztóczy and associates.
21 November	Closing session of Session Three of the Council. Ceremonial issuance of the dogmatic constitution <i>Lumen Gentium</i> and the decrees <i>Unitatis Redintegratio</i> and <i>Orientalium Ecclesiarum</i> . After the session, Secretary of State Amelto Cicognani receives the Hungarian council delegation.
23 November	The ÁEH does not permit Apostolic Administrator Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer of Esztergom to publish the Advent circular discussing the Council and the Vatican–Hungarian agreement in its original form.
24 November	The Holy See appoints György Zemplén rector of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute in Rome.
1–6 December	Archbishop Hamvas, Bishop Kovács and Apostolic Administrator Brezanóczy attend the 38th International Eucharistic Congress in Bombay.
2–5 December	Pope Paul VI travels to Bombay for the 38th International Eucharistic Congress.

- 4 December István Hamvas visits Luigi Bongianino in the Secretariat of State.
8 December Seven Jesuit priests and seven youth pastors are arrested on the charge of pastoral organization among young people.
24 December Bishop József Ijjas of Csanád receives an anonymous letter calling on him to resign on moral grounds.

1965

- 4 January Pope Paul VI sets the date of 14 September for start of the fourth and final session of the Council.
7 February The Vietnam War starts.
19 February After many years under house arrest, Archbishop Josef Beran of Prague arrives in Rome.
6 April Pope Paul VI sets up the Secretariat for Non-Christians under Cardinal Franz König.
29 April–2 May The Paulus-Gesellschaft Conference in Salzburg.
7 May At the 31st General Congregation of the Society of Jesus, Pope Paul VI calls on the Jesuits to act against atheism.
11 June Bishop Bertalan Badalik of Veszprém and Archbishop Hamvas meet with Cardinal Franz König in Széher Street Hospital.
14–21 June A delegation of the Hungarian government conducts talks with representatives of the Holy See in Rome, reviewing the experiences since the partial agreement of 1964.
4 August The HSWP Politburo approves the list of Hungarian clergy to attend Session Four of the Council.
7 August Archbishop Hamvas sends a letter to ÁEH Chairman József Prantner requesting permission for all Hungarian bishops to attend the Council.
18 August The Hungarian Bench of Bishops passes new rules of operation. Imre Miklós, deputy chairman of the ÁEH, sends Archbishop Hamvas the list of Hungarian clergy permitted to travel to Session Four.
28 August The ÁEH rejects the draft rules of operation passed by the Bench of Bishops on 18 August.
31 August The HSWP Politburo discusses the illness of József Mindszenty. Pál Ilku, minister of culture, approves the list of Hungarian clergy to travel to Session Four.
9 September The Hungarian council delegation arrive in Rome for Session Four.
10 September The Hungarian bishops pay a visit to Pericle Felice, general secretary of the Council.

12 September	In a homily delivered at the Domitilla Catacombs, Pope Paul VI talks of the Holy See's opposition to the oppression of the Church in some countries.
13–17 September	Representatives of the Holy See and the Hungarian government conduct talks on Mindszenty.
14 September	Start of Session Four of the Council.
15 September	In his <i>motu proprio Apostolica sollicitudo</i> , Pope Paul VI sets up the Synod of Bishops.
4 October	Pope Paul VI delivers a speech to the UN General Council.
5 October	Bishop Ijjas, Apostolic Administrators Brezanóczy and Cserháti and Bishop Winkler have a meeting with French council participants.
6 October	At the 143th session of the Council, Pál Brezanóczy speaks on the question of war and peace.
7 October	Agostino Casaroli speaks with József Bánk and József Ijjas.
8 October	Agostino Casaroli speaks with József Ijjas.
9 October	Agostino Casaroli meets Miklós Dudás. Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely travels to Hungary for his 50th anniversary mass.
10 October	Bishop Bertalan Badalik of Veszprém dies in Budapest.
12 October	A requiem is held in <i>Domus Mariae</i> to the memory of Bishop Bertalan Badalik.
13 October	Bishop József Ijjas discusses financial support for the Hungarian Church with P. Werenfried van Straaten.
16 October	József Bánk's speech on the schema concerning the ministry and life of priests is read out in his absence by József Ijjas at the 151st session of the Council. Apostolic Administrator Sándor Klempa of Veszprém travels to the Holy Land.
19–23 October	Representatives of the ÁEH hold a meeting with representatives of the Yugoslavian Federal Church Committee.
28 October	Pope Paul VI passes several documents considered by the Council: the decrees <i>Christus Dominus</i> , <i>Perfectae Caritatis</i> and <i>Optatam Totius</i> and the declarations <i>Gravissimum Educationis</i> and <i>Nostra Aetate</i> .
3 November	The Hungarian ordinaries hold a meeting in <i>Domus Mariae</i> .
7 November	Agostino Casaroli visits Archbishop Endre Hamvas in Rome.
9 November	Archbishop Hamvas returns to Hungary for medical treatment. Agostino Casaroli holds talks with Apostolic Administrator Brezanóczy and subsequently with Auxiliary Bishop Kovács of Vác. The operative officer sent to Rome for Session Four returns to Hungary. The agents are subsequently handled by the Rome residency.

PRESSED BY A DOUBLE LOYALTY

- 11 November Agostino Casaroli talks to Apostolic Administrator Sándor Klempa of Veszprém. The Hungarian bishops have dinner with the French bishops.
- 15 November The pilgrims' group organized by Actio Catholica arrive in Rome.
- 15–19 November Bishop Sándor Kovács, accompanied by professor of liturgy Polikárp Radó and parish priest of Tabán Béla Körmendi attend a meeting of the Liturgy Commission.
- 18 November Pope Paul VI approves the dogmatic constitution *Dei Verbum* and the decree *Apostolicam Actuositatem*.
- 19 November Bishop Miklós Dudás of Hajdúdorog celebrates a Hungarian-language mass in the Greek rite in St Peter's Basilica. Agostino Casaroli talks with Apostolic Administrator Brezanóczy.
- 2 December Pope Paul VI grants an audience to the Hungarian prelates attending the Council.
- 7 December Apostolic Administrator Brezanóczy meets Luigi Bongianino. Pope Paul VI passes the declaration *Dignitatis Humanae*, the decrees *Ad Gentes* and *Presbyterorum Ordinis* and the pastoral constitution *Gaudium et Spes*.
- 8 December Closing ceremony of the Second Vatican Council.
- 9 December Agostino Casaroli and Substitute of the Secretariat of State Angelo Dell'Aqua give an audience to the Hungarian bishops.
- 11 December The Hungarian council delegation arrives back in Hungary at 8.03 pm.

1966

- 3 January Pope Paul VI sets up the post-Council Commission by motu proprio *Finis Concilio*.
- 13 January The ÁEH draws up a schedule for studying the council documents.
- 19 January The Bishops' Conference approves the Hungarian translation of the permanent parts of the mass produced by the National Liturgy Council.
- 15 March Cardinal Franz König of Vienna visits József Mindszenty in the United States Embassy in Budapest.
- 18 March The Congregation of the Doctrine of the Faith issues its Instruction on Mixed Marriages.
- 28 April–
1 May The Paulus-Gesellschaft conference in Herrenchiemsee.

29 April– 10 May	In Rome, Apostolic Administrator Pál Brezanóczy of Eger discusses the approval of the rules of the Bishops' Conference, church real estate and the Pontifical Hungarian Institute.
7 May	The Consistorial Congregation approves the rules of the Hungarian Catholic Bishops' Conference <i>ad experimentum</i> .
19 May	The ÁEH produces its first assessment of council documents.
25 June	Milutin Morača, the plenipotentiary commissioner of the Yugoslavian government and Agostino Casaroli, the representative of the Holy See in Belgrade, sign an agreement between the Holy See and the Socialist Federal Republic of Yugoslavia.
28 July	Death of Bishop Kálmán Papp of Győr.

1967

13–17 January	Representatives of the Hungarian government conduct talks in Rome with representatives of the Holy See.
30–31 January	The Secretariat for Non-Christians holds its first plenary session in Rome. It examines the state of atheism in various countries, the reasons for it and how it is spreading.
4–16 February	Representatives of the Holy See talk with the Hungarian government in Budapest.
21 February	The HSWP Politburo agrees that Hungarian bishops may take part in the European Roman Catholic Bishops' Conference.
25 March	Pope Paul VI announces that the First Synod of Bishops will be held in Rome on 29 September.
28 March	Pope Paul VI issues his encyclical <i>Populorum progressio</i> .
27–30 April	The Paulus-Gesellschaft conference in Mariánské Lázně.
26–27 June	The religious offices of the socialist countries hold a meeting in Budapest to assess the Second Vatican Council.
10–13 July	The Council of the Bishops' Conferences of Europe holds its Plenary Assembly in the Netherlands. The central theme of the meeting is the setting up of presbyteral councils and pastoral councils. From Hungary, Apostolic Administrator Pál Brezanóczy and Bishop József Ijjas take part.
24–27 July	The state security organizations of the socialist countries assess the Second Vatican Council at a meeting in Budapest.
25–26 July	Pope Paul VI visits Turkey. He meets Patriarch Athenagoras of Constantinople.
13 August	The Apostolic Constitution <i>Regimini Ecclesiae universae</i> is issued, reorganizing the Curia in Rome.

- 20 August St Stephen's Pilgrims' Home opens in Rome.
12 September The HSWP Politburo no longer sees Cardinal Franz König's visits to Budapest as desirable.
25–30 September Leaders of the religious offices of the socialist countries meeting in Warsaw consider the possibility of dialogue.
29 September–
29 October The first Synod of Bishops in Rome. It discusses five themes: 1. Revision of canon law; 2. Liturgical reform; 3. Mixed marriages; 4. Reform of seminary training; 5. Certain false beliefs related to the question of atheism. The Apostolic Administrator Pál Brezanóczy from Hungary attends the Synod.
5 October Cardinal Franz König visits József Mindszenty in the Budapest embassy of the United States.
25 November Death of Bishop József Pétery of Vác.
6 December The Bench of Bishops order that the following year, a diocesan presbyteral council must be set up in every diocese.
8 December In his message to people of good will, Pope Paul VI endorses the proposal to make 1 January the World Day of Peace. The pope publishes his message of peace on 15 December.

1968

- 21 January Death of Bishop Lajos Shvoy of Székesfehérvár.
28 August The Secretariat for Non-Christians publishes the document *Dialogue with Unbelievers*.
3–7 September Representatives of the Holy See meet with the Hungarian government in Budapest.

1969

- 10 January Pope Paul VI relieves Artúr Schwarz-Eggenhofer of his post as apostolic administrator of Esztergom and names Imre Szabó, titular bishop of Thyatira as his successor, appointing György Zemplén, rector of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute, as auxiliary bishop of Esztergom. He appoints Archbishop Endre Hamvas of Kalocsa as titular archbishop of Arae and replaces him at the head of the archdiocese by Apostolic Administrator József Ijjas of Csanád. The pope appoints Apostolic Administrator Pál Brezanóczy as archbishop of Eger, recalls Apostolic Administrator Vince Kovács of Vác, and appoints Apostolic Administrator József Bánk of Győr as bishop of Vác. He also appoints Apostolic Administrator József Cserhádi of Pécs as

- chief pastor of the diocese and József Vajda as auxiliary bishop. The pope appoints József Kacziba as apostolic administrator of Győr and titular bishop of Curfuta, and József Udvardy as apostolic administrator of Csanád and titular bishop of Tabbora. He also appoints Imre Kisberk, auxiliary bishop of Székesfehérvár, as apostolic administrator of the diocese.
- 5 February The Hungarian government meets with representatives of the Holy See in Sofia.
- 31 March The Hungarian ambassador in Rome, József Száll, officially hands over an invitation to the European Conference of Security and Cooperation to a representative of the Vatican.
- 18 June The Hungarian Catholic Bishops' Conference, led by Auxiliary Bishop József Vajda of Vác, set up a committee to draw up reform of the training of priests.
- September Giovanni Cheli, diplomat for the Holy See, comes to Hungary.
- 11–28 October Archbishop József Ijjas of Kalocsa attends the extraordinary Synod of Bishops in Rome.

1970

- 6 January The document *Ratio Fundamentalis Institutionis Sacerdotalis* on reform of the training of priests is issued.
- 3 April Death of Endre Hamvas, retired archbishop of Kalocsa.
- 15–20 June Representatives of the Holy See hold talks with the Hungarian government in Budapest.
- 6–11 September Envoys of the Hungarian government hold talks with representatives of the Holy See in Rome.

1971

- 16 April Pope Paul VI receives the Hungarian foreign minister, János Péter.
- 4–7 May Representatives of the Holy See hold talks with the Hungarian government in Budapest.
- 14 May Pope Paul VI outlines his social doctrines in the Apostolic letter *Octogesima adveniens*.
- 14–17 July Representatives of the Holy See hold talks with the Hungarian government in Budapest.
- 15 July The Council for the Public Affairs of the Church revokes the excommunication which it imposed on Miklós Beresztóczy, Richárd Horváth and Imre Várkonyi for their political involvement. The decision is made public on 13 October.

- 9 September The Holy See and the Hungarian government come to an agreement on the conditions for the departure of József Mindszenty.
- 28 September Cardinal József Mindszenty leaves Hungary in the car of the papal nuncio to Vienna.
- 9 December The document *Renovatio Institutionis Sacerdotalis in Seminariis Hungariae* is passed.

1972

- 8 February Pope Paul VI relieves Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely and Apostolic Administrator Sándor Klempa of Veszprém of their posts. He names László Lékai, parish priest of Badacsonytomaj, as apostolic administrator of Veszprém, Árpád Fábán, rector of the Pontifical Hungarian Institute, as apostolic administrator of Szombathely, László Kádár, archiepiscopal secretary of Eger, as auxiliary bishop of Veszprém, and Mihály Endrey as auxiliary bishop of Pécs.
- 11 February Death of Archbishop Pál Brezanóczy of Eger.
- 15 July Death of Bishop Miklós Dudás of Hajdúdorog.
- 24 December Death of Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely.

1974

- 2 February Pope Paul VI appoints Apostolic Administrator László Lékai of Veszprém, as apostolic administrator of Esztergom, Bishop József Bánk of Győr as archbishop of Eger, Apostolic Administrator Imre Kisberk as bishop of Székesfehérvár, and Auxiliary Bishop László Kádár as apostolic administrator of Veszprém.
- 15 March Death of Auxiliary Bishop Vince Kovács of Vác.

1975

- 6 May Death of Cardinal József Mindszenty, archbishop of Esztergom.
- 1 August Signing of the Helsinki Final Act.

Annex 1.

Hungarian participants in the Second Vatican Council and their escorts

Session One (October 11–December 8, 1962)

Council fathers

Endre Hamvas, bishop of Csanád

Sándor Kovács, bishop of Szombathely

Council expert

Pál Brezanóczy, apostolic administrator of Eger,¹ procurator of Kálmán Papp, bishop of Győr

agent codenamed “Pál Kékes”²

Escorts

Miklós Esty, honorary chamberlain to His Holiness, lay president of the Saint Stephen Society

agent codenamed “Pátkay”³

István Hamvas, parish priest of Makó

agent codenamed “Kecskeméti”⁴

Vid Mihelics, editor of *Vigilia*

agent codenamed “Béla Molnár”⁵

Polikárp Radó, professor at the Theological Academy

László Semptey, professor at the Theological Academy

agent codenamed “Hívó”⁶

Imre Timkó, professor at the Theological Academy

agent codenamed “János Kiss”⁷

Session Two

Council fathers

Endre Hamvas, bishop of Csanád
Sándor Kovács, bishop of Szombathely
Vince Kovács, auxiliary bishop of Vác
Kálmán Papp, bishop of Győr
Szabó Imre, auxiliary bishop of Esztergom

Council expert

Pál Brezanóczy, apostolic administrator of Eger, procurator of Kálmán Papp,
bishop of Győr
agent codenamed “Pál Kékes”

Escorts

Géza Ákos, director of the office of the bishop of Vác
agent codenamed “György”⁸
József Bánk, professor at the Theological Academy
Ignác Csepregi, director of the office of the bishop of Esztergom
agent codenamed “Dr. Szabó”⁹
Miklós Esty, honorary chamberlain to His Holiness, lay president of the
Saint Stephen Society
agent codenamed “Pátkay”
István Hamvas, parish priest of Makó
agent codenamed “Kecskeméti”
György Kovács, rector of the Győr Seminary
agent codenamed “Péter Győri”¹⁰
Kornél Pataky, director of the office of the bishop of Csanád
agent codenamed “Kerekes”¹¹
Ervin Siminszky, medical doctor
Imre Timkó, professor at the Theological Academy
agent codenamed “János Kiss”
“Dr. Balázs”¹²

Session Three

Council fathers

József Bánk, auxiliary bishop of Győr

Potential agent codenamed “Professzor”¹³

Pál Brezanóczy, apostolic administrator of Eger, titular bishop of Rotara
agent codenamed “Kékes”

József Cserháti, apostolic administrator of Pécs, titular bishop of Tagarata
Potential agent codenamed “Pécsi”¹⁴

Endre Hamvas, archbishop of Kalocsa

József Ijjas, apostolic administrator of Csanád, titular bishop of Melz
agent codenamed “Péter”¹⁵

Sándor Kovács, bishop of Szombathely

Vince Kovács, auxiliary bishop of Vác

Norbert Legányi, archabbot of Pannonhalma

Imre Szabó, auxiliary bishop of Esztergom

József Winkler, auxiliary bishop of Szombathely

Council Expert

Sándor Klempa, apostolic administrator of Veszprém¹⁶
agent codenamed “László”¹⁷

Escorts

Géza Ákos, director of the office of the bishop of Vác
agent codenamed “György”

István Hamvas, parish priest of Makó
agent codenamed “Kecskeméti”

György Vitányi, deputy general secretary of the Catholic Committee of
the National Peace Council

Social contact “Vadász”¹⁸

Session Four

Council fathers

József Bánk, auxiliary bishop of Győr

Agent “Professzor”¹⁹

Pál Brezanóczy, apostolic administrator of Eger, titular bishop of Rotara
agent codenamed “Kékes”

József Cserháti, apostolic administrator of Pécs, titular bishop of Tagarata

Miklós Dudás, bishop of Hajdúdorog

Endre Hamvas, archbishop of Kalocsa

József Ijjas, apostolic administrator of Csanád, titular bishop of Melz.
agent codenamed “Péter”

Sándor Kovács, bishop of Szombathely

Target person “Kaszás”²⁰

Vince Kovács, auxiliary bishop of Vác

József Winkler, auxiliary bishop of Szombathely

Council Expert

Sándor Klempa, apostolic administrator of Veszprém
agent codenamed “László”

Escorts

Géza Ákos, director of the office of the bishop of Vác
agent codenamed “György”

Géza Kovács, director of the office of the archbishop of Kalocsa
agent codenamed “Péter Tóth”²¹

György Vitányi, deputy general secretary of the Catholic Committee of the
National Peace Council

Social contact “Vadász”

Notes

- ¹ Pope John XXIII appointed Pál Brezanóczy, apostolic administrator of Eger, as council expert on September 28, 1962.
- ² Tabajdi and Ungváry, *Elhallgatott múlt*, 288. Major written and verbal reports by “Kékes”: ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs–2/1. “Hontalanok,” 300–303; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/4. “Canale,” 6–11; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14963/5. “Canale,” 26–50; Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 124–28.; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 183–204; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/9–a. “Canale,” 502–503; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 122–26.
- ³ Kiszely, *Állambiztonság*, 121–23. Major reports by “Pátkay” (sometimes “Pátkai”): ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–13 405/3–b. “Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Kar,” 290–92; ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs–2/1. “Hontalanok,” 178, 194–215; ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs–2/2. “Hontalanok,” 149; ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs–2/4. “Hontalanok,” 182–85; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. “Canale,” 293–97, 328–31a.
- ⁴ Kiszely, *Állambiztonság*, 130. See also: Network agent personal data sheet. ÁBTL 3.2.1. Bt–392. “Kecskeméti,” 8–9a. Report on agent “Kecskeméti.” Szeged, 1962. június 2. ÁBTL 3.2.1. Bt–392. “Kecskeméti,” 16–16. Major reports by “Kecskeméti”: ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs–2/2. “Hontalanok,” 188–89, 226–31; ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs–2/3. “Hontalanok,” 68–100, 107–12, 132–37; ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs–2/4. “Hontalanok,” 149–154; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/3. “Canale,” 193–98; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 14–23, 51–58; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/6. “Canale,” 32–34, 169–171; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 15–18, 85–95, 100–17; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/9. “Canale,” 86–98; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/9–a. “Canale,” 322–23; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 58–64.
- ⁵ Kiszely, *Állambiztonság*, 117. Major reports by “Béla Molnár”: Szabó, *Szentszék és Magyar Népköztársaság*, 129–32; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 863/4. “Canale,” 24–30; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 3–11, 65–70; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. “Canale,” 216–20, 262–66.
- ⁶ Soós, “Kovács Sándor,” 951. The only report we obtained regarding council documents by “Hivő”: ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 65–81.

- ⁷ Tabajdi and Ungváry, *Elhallgatott múlt*, 289. Major reports by “János Kiss”: ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 153–82.
- ⁸ Kiszely, *Állambiztonság*, 135–37. See also: Travel arrangements for agents to Rome. Report. Budapest, 17 September 1963. Major reports (some recorded on tape) from agent “György”: ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/4. “Canale,” 307–29, 334–36; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 14–30, 138–39, 190–97.
- ⁹ He can be identified: Travel arrangements for agents to Rome. Report. Budapest, 17 September 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 191–92. The only report we obtained by “Dr. Szabó”: ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. “Canale,” 312–17.
- ¹⁰ Cf. Travel arrangements for agents to Rome. Report. Budapest, September 17, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 191–92. In another document, however, dated February 14, 1964, he is referred to only as an informer rather than as an agent. ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs–2/4. “Hontalanok,” 156–58. Further reports given (often orally) by agent “Péter Györi”: ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 59–63; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/6. “Canale,” 113–15; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 149–52, 211–13; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/9. “Canale,” 196.
- ¹¹ Tabajdi and Ungváry, *Elhallgatott múlt*, 289. Major reports by “Kerekes”: ÁBTL 3.2.7. Cs–2/2. “Hontalanok,” 85, 111; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. “Canale,” 298–311, 321–27; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/6–a. “Canale,” 396–97; ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 2–14, 81–84, 96–99, 218–29.
- ¹² Appears in document Travel arrangements for agents to Rome. Report. Budapest, September 17, 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5. “Canale,” 191–92, but could not be identified. Report by “Dr. Balázs” on Session Two: ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/7. “Canale,” 146–48.
- ¹³ The person referred to as “Professzor” and identifiable as József Bánk appears as a potential agent in 1964. “Professor” is described as a “social contact” in the (incomplete) summary report on Session Three. We found no report by him among the state security documents related to the Council.
- ¹⁴ The person referred to as “Pécsi” and identifiable as József Cserhádi appears as a potential agent in 1964. He was probably not actually recruited. Besides the fact that we found no reports by him in state security documents related to the Council, “Pécsi” does not appear among agents travelling to Session Four, which was attended by Cserhádi.
- ¹⁵ We found no reports by him in state security documents related to the Council. According to one report, agent “Péter” gave regular information on Council problems and on the behaviour of “Kékes”. The document did not find “Péter” reliable, however. Incomplete summary document on Session Three. Elsewhere is the bare statement, “Via agent »Péter« we learned of a list of new suffragans.” See: ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 136.

- ¹⁶ Pope John XXIII appointed Sándor Klempa, apostolic administrator of Veszprém, as council expert on 28 September 1962. “Diarium Romanae Curiae,” *Acta Apostolicae Sedis* 54 (1962): 782–83.
- ¹⁷ Tabajdi and Ungváry, *Elhallgatott múlt*, 288. Major reports by “László”: ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 31–34, 95–113.
- ¹⁸ Kiszely, Állambiztonság, 135. His surviving report: Report on conversation with György Vitányi, social contact. Budapest, 29 November 1963. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/4. “Canale,” 267–70. and ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/5–a. “Canale,” 332–45.
- ¹⁹ Before Session Four, “Professzor” started to appear in documents as “agent” rather than “potential agent”. Proposal on the preparation of agents for the fourth session. Budapest, August 6, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 116. and Operational conditions during session four. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 221–22. He is referred to only as “contact” rather than “agent” in: “Report on activities of the Hungarian council delegation participating in Session Four of the Second Vatican Council”. Budapest, November 11, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 136.
- ²⁰ Regarded as agent by Máté-Tóth, “II. Vatikáni Zsinat,” 39. and Tabajdi and Ungváry, *Elhallgatott múlt*, 288. By contrast, Soós, “Kovács Sándor,” convincingly argues that Bishop Sándor Kovács of Szombathely had the cover name “Kaszás” as “target person”.
- ²¹ Identifiable as Géza Kovács, director of the office of the archbishop: Proposal on the preparation of agents for the fourth session. Budapest, August 6, 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 117–18. We found no report from him. His activity in Rome is assessed positively in: Report on activities of the Hungarian council delegation participating in Session Four of the Second Vatican Council. Budapest, 11 November 1965. ÁBTL 3.1.5. O–14 963/10. “Canale,” 136.

Annex 2.

Hungarian council fathers *de iure* and *de facto*

Council fathers <i>de iure</i>		Council fathers <i>de facto</i>			
		Session I	Session II	Session III	Session IV
Bertalan BADALIK					
János BÁRD					
Gellért BELON*					
Miklós DUDÁS					X
Vendel ENDRÉDY					
Mihály ENDREY					
Endre HAMVAS		X	X	X	X
Imre KISBERK					
Sándor KOVÁCS		X	X	X	X
Vince KOVÁCS			X	X	X
Norbert LEGÁNYI				X	
József MINDSZENTY					
Kálmán PAPP			X		
József PÉTERY					
Lajos SHVOY					
Imre SZABÓ			X	X	
István UZDÓCZY-ZADRAVECZ					
after 1964	József BÁNK			X	X
	Pál BREZANÓCZY	peritus	peritus	X	X
	József CSERHÁTI			X	X
	József IJJAS			X	X
	József WINKLER			X	X

* Gellért Belon was considered council father by the Holy See, even if he was only an appointed but not ordained bishop. Cf. ASV Conc. Vat. II., b. 333, 10/2. Ungheria, Interventi al Concilio, III periodo. (1964)

Annex 3.

Hungarian contributions to the work of the Council

Council's document/ schema	Name of the Council father and kind of contribution			
	oral		written	
	Session I	Session II	Session III	Session IV
Charitas Christi urget nos	Endre Hamvas			
de S. Liturgia	Sándor Kovács			
	Sándor Kovács			
de Ecclesia		Endre Hamvas Sándor Kovács		
de Episcopis ac dioecesium regimine		Endre Hamvas Bench of Hungarian Bishops		
de Oecumenismo		Endre Hamvas		
		Sándor Kovács		
de Matrimonii sacr.		József Bánk		
de Vita e ministerio sacerdotali			József Bánk	József Cserhádi
			József Bánk	
de Institutione sacerdotali			József Bánk József Cserhádi	
de Ecclesia in mundo huius temporis			Endre Hamvas	Endre Hamvas
				Endre Hamvas
				Pál Brezanóczy

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Copies of the archive documents marked* were provided by Margit Balogh.

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ASDMAE	<i>Archivio Storico Diplomatico del Ministero per gli Affari Esteri</i> (Rome)
DGAP 1950–57	Direzione generale affari politici (1946–1957), Serie 1950–1957.
ASV	<i>Archivio Segreto Vaticano</i> (Vatican City) Conc. Vat. II. Concilio Vaticano II

BFL	<i>Budapest Főváros Levéltára</i> [Budapest Municipal Archives] (Budapest)
XXIII. 102.c	Documents of the Executive Committee of Budapest City Council. Documents of secret administration (TÜK) 1950–1989.
MKPK Irattára*	<i>Magyar Katolikus Püspöki Konferencia Irattára</i> [Archives of the Hungarian Catholic Bishops' Conference] (Budapest) Eppi Hung. Minutes of the Bishops' Conference
MNL OL	<i>Magyar Nemzeti Levéltár Országos Levéltára</i> [Hungarian National Archives] (Budapest) M–KS 288. f. 5. cs. Central Bodies of the HSWP. Politburo. M–KS 288. f. 22. cs. Central Bodies of the HSWP. Department of Agitation and Propaganda. XIX–A–21–a. State Office for Church Affairs. Presidents' documents. XIX–A–21–c. State Office for Church Affairs. Archives. XIX–A–21–d. State Office for Church Affairs. Reclassified documents of secret administration. XIX–A–21–e. State Office for Church Affairs. Thematic documents. XIX–J–1–j. Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Documents of secret administration. (Italy, Vatican)
SZIA	<i>Szent István Alapítvány</i> [St Stephen Foundation] (Rome) Zágon Zágon Collection
VPKL*	<i>Váci Püspöki és Káptalani Levéltár</i> [Vác Episcopal and Chapter Archives] (Vác) I.1.n. Conferentia episcoporum (Documents concerning bishops' conferences)

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